



Educational Strategies for Youth Empowerment in Conflict Zones

Transforming, not
Transmitting, Trauma

Nyla Ali Khan

palgrave
macmillan

Educational Strategies for Youth Empowerment in Conflict Zones

Nyla Ali Khan

Educational Strategies for Youth Empowerment in Conflict Zones

Transforming, not Transmitting, Trauma

palgrave
macmillan

Nyla Ali Khan
Edmond, OK, USA

ISBN 978-3-030-66225-7 ISBN 978-3-030-66226-4 (eBook)
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-66226-4>

© The Editor(s) (if applicable) and The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer
Nature Switzerland AG 2021

This work is subject to copyright. All rights are solely and exclusively licensed by the Publisher, whether the whole or part of the material is concerned, specifically the rights of translation, reprinting, reuse of illustrations, recitation, broadcasting, reproduction on microfilms or in any other physical way, and transmission or information storage and retrieval, electronic adaptation, computer software, or by similar or dissimilar methodology now known or hereafter developed.

The use of general descriptive names, registered names, trademarks, service marks, etc. in this publication does not imply, even in the absence of a specific statement, that such names are exempt from the relevant protective laws and regulations and therefore free for general use.

The publisher, the authors and the editors are safe to assume that the advice and information in this book are believed to be true and accurate at the date of publication. Neither the publisher nor the authors or the editors give a warranty, expressed or implied, with respect to the material contained herein or for any errors or omissions that may have been made. The publisher remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by the registered company Springer Nature Switzerland AG

The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

*For my father who always believed that the story of the people of Jammu
and Kashmir was one of resilience, not of defeat.*

FOREWORD BY ROBERT C. BARNES

“In her book *Educational Strategies for Youth Empowerment in Conflict Zones: Transforming, Not Transmitting, Trauma*, Dr. Nyla Ali Khan boldly deals with the reality with which all of us are faced with today. She warmly recalls the beauty of her homeland, Kashmir. For decades, tourists have travelled from around the world to experience the inspiration of Kashmir’s majestically beautiful mountains. However, this is no longer a possibility. After decades of political unrest, Dr. Khan watched the disintegration of her beloved homeland which has had a devastating effect on the people of Kashmir. Similar results of the same negative energies are seen in American cities such as Chicago and New York, as well as other cities worldwide.

I refer to the words of German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche who said, “He who has a why to live can bear with almost any how.” Victor Frankl (author of *Man’s Search for Meaning*) might have substituted the word “purpose” for Nietzsche’s word “why.” Nietzsche’s “any how” might have been Frankl’s word “circumstance.” Frankl validated the scientific reality of his theory known as Logotherapy by studying the prisoners in Nazi camps who were allowed to live. Those prisoners who had a purpose in life were the ones who survived. Those prisoners who did not have a purpose to live chose suicide.

Dr. Nyla Ali Khan refers to the richness found in the legacy of her own parents, grandparents, and others who chose Frankl’s concept of Self-Transcendence instead of destroying what had been achieved by others.

This legacy has instilled in her a love for her homeland and given her an appreciation for the strong intergenerational support system she received. Dr. Khan's book belongs in homes, educational classroom, and libraries around the world."

Dr. Robert C. Barnes
President of the International Board of Directors for the Viktor
Frankl Institute of Logotherapy
Abilene, Texas, USA

FOREWORD BY KHURSHID MAHMUD KASURI

Dr. Nyla Ali Khan, scion of a leading Kashmiri family in her book, *Educational Strategies for Youth Empowerment in Conflict Zones*, has given a very moving account of the situation in Jammu and Kashmir. The misfortunes that they continue to suffer is due to the unending conflict between Pakistan and India ever since independence. She has suggested educational strategies for youth and employment in conflict zone, such as Kashmir. I can fully empathize with the pain reflected in her writings. In my book, *Neither a Hawk, Nor a Dove*, while dealing with the issues of peace in Kashmir and between Pakistan and India, I pointed out that a very large number of Kashmiris, particularly, women and children had suffered psychological trauma due to the presence of troops on the streets of their towns and villages. This was the major reason why it was decided during the back-channel talks that troops would be withdrawn from urban areas gradually to the Line of Control and kept there at the bare minimum needed to maintain law and order. Pakistan, as a reciprocal gesture also agreed to do the same in AJK.

She also emphasizes the importance of training citizens to seek non-military and humane solutions to the problems of living under occupation forces. While I can understand her motivations and empathize with her sentiments, all major international issues including those in the Balkans and in South Africa to which she refers needed a just political solution before peace could be restored. I gave all the details in my book, the contents of which have not been contradicted by any Indian or Pakistani

who was in the loop in the most successful peace process between the two countries since independence during our tenure. The wisdom underlying the envisaged solution and of peace between Pakistan and India was realized by both BJP Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and the Congress Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh. PM Vajpayee who highlighted the need for ‘Insaniyat, Jamhuriyat, Kashmiriyat’ had realized that this could also provide the basis for peace in Kashmir and between the two countries, for which purpose he ‘extended the hand of friendship to Pakistan’. PM Vajpayee’s wisdom is also reflected in an article ‘Kumarakom Musings’ carried by one of India’s leading magazines, ‘the Outlook’: ‘two things were keeping India from achieving its potential at the international level; its problem with Pakistan over Kashmir dispute and the demolition of Babri Masjid.’ Dr. Manmohan Singh of the Congress Party during whose tenure we had agreed to a detailed framework for resolving J&K also remarked, ‘I dream of a day, while retaining our respective national identities, one can have breakfast in Amritsar, lunch in Lahore, and dinner in Kabul.

Kashmir through centuries has been noted for communal harmony and religious syncretism and Dr. Nyla Ali Khan is obviously imbued with the same spirit of Kashmiriyat about which all Kashmiris can be genuinely proud. I have always maintained that a solution of J&K is possible if there is a political will on both sides and the solution envisages a win-win for Kashmiris Pakistanis and Indians. I would conclude by congratulating Dr. Khan for her efforts towards suggesting the strategies that will help reduce some of the pain that all Kashmiris, men, women and children feel so acutely.

Khurshid Mahmud Kasuri
Former Minister of Foreign Affairs
Lahore, Pakistan

FOREWORD BY MANI SHANKAR AIYAR

Dr. Nyla Khan is not only a child of the trauma that J&K has been undergoing since the early '90s, she is also an exceptional survivor through emotional resilience. She demonstrates that even as the tragedy of her people unfolds, and does not seem to have an end, it is possible to find hope and forgiveness even as it is possible to find faith in oneself and one's destiny instead of giving in to bitterness or hatred or aching for revenge.

Her prescriptions, drawn from her own suffering and psychological rejuvenation, are universally applicable and can be applied to society as whole and not just a particularly strong individual like herself. Her own path to escaping out of present despair and into the "sunlit uplands" of an imagined future is not resort to violence but the quintessential Kashmiri response to centuries of oppression: conviction in pluralism and democracy and good sense prevailing eventually over tyranny and oppression.

That she belongs to the premier political family of the Riyasat does not much intrude in her account or her formulae for resolution. Rather, it is an intense love for her homeland, pride in her cause of genuine constitutional freedom for her people and love for her family, above all, her doctor father that sustains the reader through the wrenching times the author has been through and, indeed, is going through even at present in a distant land.

She is an exile only in a physical sense for her heart beats in her vale and her mind is enveloped not in hatred, which is the obvious reaction, but

in memories of the beauty of Kashmir and the culture and values of her people. The worst condemnation one can make of what has happened in the erstwhile state is that governmental action has brought out in some Kashmiris the worst possible reactions of violence and hatred, but, happily, it has also stimulated compassion, empathy and a readiness for reconciliation in other hearts provided such reconciliation is infused with justice.

Moreover, the author exemplifies practical ways of moving beyond present trauma by taking the professional path of education, the only way coming generations of Kashmiris and others can be led to values of eternal and lasting importance eschewing momentary feelings of revenge.

A passionate and deeply felt appeal that will, I am sure, find a wide and appreciate readership. Dr. Nyla emerges as another diamond in the diadem of the Riyasat's number one family.

November 2020

Mani Shankar Aiyar
Former MP and Union Cabinet Minister
New Delhi, India

FOREWORD BY YASHWANT SINHA

Jammu and Kashmir is one of the abiding tragedies of our time. All parties to the issue have contributed significantly to making the situation worse. The havoc wreaked by militancy and militarization are laid bare in this study of Kashmir. In her book *Educational Strategies for Youth Empowerment in Conflict Zones*, Dr. Nyla Ali Khan, scion of a leading political family in Jammu and Kashmir, points to the prodigious influence of local communities in restoring confidence among their traumatized peoples.

She also emphasizes the importance of training citizens to seek non-military and humane solutions to the problems of living under militancy on the one hand and military on the other. By taking account of the values, sentiments and motivation of ordinary folks in conflict zones like Jammu and Kashmir—not only members of the elite and decision makers—Dr. Nyla Ali Khan explains how the tribulations of people in conflict zones can be ameliorated.

Seeking out commonalities between survivors in other areas of the world such as the Balkans, apartheid and post-apartheid South Africa, and elsewhere can only inform Kashmiris that they are not alone. Through the dynamic interplay of scholars, activists, and clinicians, Dr. Nyla establishes that intergenerational conversations about historical and political traumas lead to healing and empowerment at both individual and collective levels. Our survival depends on a significant slice of the human race accomplishing changes in worldviews from one of loyalties to ultra-right wing nationalisms to loyalty to societal reconstruction, peace-building,

and life itself. Dr. Nyla Ali Khan's balanced views and arguments have enabled her to rise above partisan loyalties and fundamentalist thinking. I congratulate her for this book.

Yashwant Sinha
Former Minister of Finance in India
New Delhi, India

PREFACE

While working on *Educational Strategies for Youth Empowerment in Conflict Zones: Transforming, Not Transmitting Trauma*, I suffered a profound personal loss. My father, Mohammad Ali Matto passed away on March 29, 2020 after having battled lung cancer with emotional and spiritual strength, and having chosen medical treatment alternatives with intelligence. While personal bereavement cannot be analogized with the trauma of a beleaguered community, I learned the importance of choosing one's attitude from him. As Viktor Frankl writes in *Man's Search for Meaning*: "Everything can be taken from man but one thing, the last of the human freedoms—to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way" (120). My father was not one to shy away from the inevitability of death. He understood his illness and knew that he had no control over the progression of the disease, but he retained control over his attitude. At the end of the day, that is the one thing we can exercise control over—our attitude in times of difficulty. His identity remained grounded in local cultural beliefs that, he believed, had always been elixirs until the very end, he was tied to the traditions that, for him, were evocative of meaning and in which his sense of identity was grounded.

For the longest time, I did not come to terms with my father's illness. I couldn't bring myself to either talk about it or write about it. I convinced myself that his illness was curable. I couldn't bring myself to say the word "cancer." When his disease was in remission, I deluded myself

into believing that he was cancer-free. But being the realist he was, my father reminded me that recurrence was a possibility, and I needed to be prepared for that eventuality. He took his disease by the horns and did not sink into despair. Unlike a lot of people with cancer, he did not allow depression to overcome him and remained in complete control of his thoughts. No one could relieve him of his suffering or suffer in his place. He recognized that his unique opportunity lay in the attitude with which he bore his cross. He confronted this disease with the same composure with which he handled ordinary occurrences. He often told me that people should feel free to delight in life until the last breath. He taught me how to live, and the flame of my father's love will never be extinguished.

Every calamity and every conflict reminds us of the fragility of life. Life is transient and precarious. The sooner we realize that we live on the edge of an abyss, the more present we will be for every moment, big and small. Acknowledging the uncertainty of life will enable us to recognize the potential for meaning in every moment. Our lives have meaning not despite the fragility of life, but because of it. We can learn to see every challenge as an opportunity to grow, because we are not immortal and must make the most of every minute on earth. A lot of us focus on BIG ACHIEVEMENTS and ABSTRACT CONCEPTS, forgetting that the small moments and small steps count as much as, if not more than, the big ones.

In thinking about the intergenerational mental and emotional trauma by which younger generations in my native land, Kashmir, are afflicted, and how the resilience of families as well as education can help them rebuild their lives, I was inspired by my father's undying love for the land of his birth. His emotional connection with the land of his birth ensured that I recognized the palpable contrast between the enchanting beauty of Kashmir and the glazed eyes of its people. His cultural pride inspired me to hear the strains of mystical music, not just cacophonous sounds of hate and virulence. Although the soothing fragrance of pine-covered hills in Kashmir was overwhelmed by the odor of Machiavellian politics, my father ensured that I cultivated resilience and hope. He taught me that we cannot resign ourselves to pain and loss. Although he lived in a culture that was shaped by memories of unfulfilled pledges, broken promises, political deception, military oppression, illegal political detentions, a scathing human rights record, sterile political alliances, mass exodus, and New Delhi's and Islamabad's malignant interference have created a gangrenous body politic, which hasn't even started to heal. He

did not choose defeatist or ruinous strategies to overcome the conditions under which he was living. Despite having witnessed so much turmoil, he did not lose his robust faith in the resilience of humanity.

I have watched the disintegration of my homeland, and I have watched the unravelling of young minds caused by political pandemonium. I was raised in a world in which most people enjoyed the protection of strong support systems. My parents always remained grounded and in close touch with their relatives in every nook and cranny of the Valley. They also retained a strong passion for their culture. In the days of insurgency and counterinsurgency in the 1990s, it was difficult to venture out of suburbia, but my father would regularly visit his relatives in the heart of the city. And, even though his professional status entitled him to have one, he would refuse to be surrounded by a personal security detail, because he found that stifling. In that era, even politically obscure people found ways to have security guards assigned to them, but my father chose to stay away from fanfare. He preferred remaining accessible to his acquaintances, colleagues, and patients. I remember his empathy for all and sundry. In the words of Dominick LaCapra, my father clearly understood that empathy was a motivation for “social and political action, notably with respect to victims” (LaCapra, *History and Its Limits* 67).

My father was the Medical Superintendent of Shri Maharaja Hari Singh (SMHS) Hospital in Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, in the stressful decade of the 1990s. Although the hospital had limited resources, they catered to the needs of everyone without discrimination. And I remember him being kind even to those who lashed out at everyone and didn’t have the nicest things to say about those members of our family who were in mainstream politics. All he wanted to do was heal the wounded. My father instilled pride in me for where I came from. He also instilled the confidence in me to respect cultural traditions and to explore the conflicts within them. As Sociologist Jeffrey C. Alexander observed in his interview with Political Scientists Ajay Gudavarthy, “not all culture is ‘political,’ not attached to domination.” He underlined that “People of all ideologies need traditions, codes, and collective meanings; they need vibrant and powerful material symbols; they need to be engaged, both as actors and audiences, in compelling social dramas” (<https://www.newscl ick.in/Global-Rise-of-Right-Wing-Populism-Modi-Cultural-Sociology>).

Although the politics of turbulence and disruption framed our lives, my father was firmly bound to the people, sociocultural ethos, and territory of Kashmir. My father believed in the dynamism of the Kashmiri people.

He believed that despite the blows that fate dealt them, they would emerge unscathed. He believed that quality education would give them the wherewithal to carve their own paths. I believe with Hashimoto that we, as a society, can “generate new, multifaceted options for overcoming defeat,” one of which would be the option of “education” (Hashimoto 141).

I am motivated to think about the role that family, love, and care can play in healing by Father’s and Ma’s deep affection and respect for each other strengthened our home and family. Father believed that no success could compensate for failure in the home. Although torrential rains fell, strong gusts of wind blew, and political turmoil threatened to destroy everything in its wake, the house that Father built did not fall, because its foundation was laid on love, diligence, and integrity. From the well-stocked library to the sun-lit study, the home that Father built has given me a strong foundation. I will always be grateful to my father for having raised me in a home where “local cultural beliefs and practices” were respected, because Father realized that if a community is severed from the traditions and heritage that give it an identity, it loses faith in its capabilities and silently resigns itself to the situation, however dismal it might be. I have found that self-reliance and the social safety net provided by family/community enable even the most distraught person to heal. As Gray Wilder points out, a traumatized community can move beyond a historical trauma by “acting in terms of (by moving through rather than over or around) the unavoidable socio-epistemological framework provided by a durable and persistent legacy in order to move beyond it” (Wilder 55).

How did I learn about the importance of forging intergenerational bonds by sharing good memories of a bygone era, teaching the younger generation about history, and encouraging dialogue? My parents home continues to be a space that does not brook fissures and divides. My parents’ earned a unique and respected place in the family, because they did not judge or condemn anyone’s politics. They stood by each other through thick and thin, and Father made sure that he protected Ma from the buffets of the world. The house would be abuzz with genial conversations and warm laughter. They didn’t lose sight of humanitarian principles. I’ve made it a point to take my daughter, Iman, to Kashmir every year, because I’ve been keen that she forge a strong emotional bond with our native land. I’ve also been keen that she see Kashmir not through the prism of national security and conflict, but through the prism of

love. I've wanted her to experience the richness of an ancient civilization and culture. I've wanted her to enjoy kinship relationships. The "past," as historian Timothy Ashplant reminds us, "is not automatically passed between generations," but must be actively transmitted so that later generations accept that past as meaningful" (44). To avoid speaking about our historical past makes it "nearly impossible to mourn" our "losses and to establish close relationships with others—including" our "own children" (Stein 4). I believe that it is therapeutic for the younger generation to engage with the past and to learn about historical, political, and socio-cultural legacies through a larger context that enables them to connect with family. Of course, that doesn't occlude the importance of realizing that "the reparation" of the Kashmiri community's pain, which would seep into every conversation we would have, "does not bring into being a just life" (Berlant 337). Giving our children opportunities to create channels for intergenerational communication with grandparents is bound to have a profound effect on well-being. As Sociologist Akiko Hashimoto pointed out in *The Long Defeat*, "parental mentoring matters in developing political character, and the same might be said of its influence on developing moral character" (49).

Father taught me that the essence of a home is the safe haven it provides to all who reside in it. He enriched my life and taught me so much about keeping one's head above water, even in the most gruelling situations. I see his life as a model to be emulated. My father's death is not devoid of meaning. Every human being has the potential to create meaning in a "culturally specific way" (Kanda 21). Discovering meaning, as Viktor Frankl emphasized, creatively, experientially, and attitudinally, enables us to pave "Pathways to Meaning" (ibid., 21). And my grief will not diminish over time. The realization that grief should be honored enables me to live authentically. I will not be riven apart by grief. I don't pretend that life is perfect, and I don't pretend to be perennially happy. Knowing that life is short motivates me to live it deliberately and responsibly. And my life will continue to be enriched by my father's wise counsel and unconditional affection.

I am constantly reminded about the essence of keeping good memories of a bygone alive. The thought of seeing the majestic mountain peaks, the stately chinars, the lush and blossoming lawns, and trellised fruit trees in Kashmir has always kept me going. I left the Kashmir Valley for New Delhi in 1990 to pursue my Bachelor's and Master's. The thought of the mountains and snow-covered peaks in the blistering heat of Delhi would make

me bawl. I felt like a fish out of water away from the beautiful Valley. I would eagerly look forward to the exams being over in April, so I could fly home the very next day. The cool climes of the Valley and the riot of colors in the gardens would rejuvenate me. That was my Utopia. One year, my father sent a beautiful bouquet of gladioli for me from Kashmir, which was delivered to the college dorms. Everyone in the dorms was mesmerized by the flowers from Kashmir, and we were soothed by the aroma of the Valley in the sweltering heat of Delhi. Kashmir would breathe new life into me and make me feel invincible! If anyone asks me what the elixir of life is, even today my answer would be “Kashmir.” It embodies the innocence of childhood; the growing pains of adolescence; the follies of youth; and the serenity of adulthood. I would like to emphasize, however, that my self-realization within this social order did not call for the making of a “conflict free” citizen, whose ability to think about the conflict in her homeland was obstructed.

Although I am older now, have travelled a lot more, and Kashmir has been mangled by several forces, it is still evocative of heaven for me. Even today, the only entity that has the power to make my heart melt is “*Kasbeer*.” Like my father, I too am in its thrall, and like him, I too believe that the story of the people of Jammu and Kashmir is one of resilience, not of defeat. I hope the people of the region are given the opportunities to tell their own stories, instead of being made to internalize stories that are imposed on them. I hope we see acknowledgment and recognition of their stories. I hope the marginalized and disenfranchised segment of the population of the region is not merely interred into the catacombs of history. I hope its young people are given opportunities to engage with history from a perspective that empowers them. I pray that the young people of Jammu and Kashmir are imbued with self-esteem, because their story, God willing, will be one of restoration, not debasement.

This is what led me to write a book on educational strategies for youth empowerment in regions that are torn apart by conflict as well as religious and sectarian schisms; to focus on what it would take for us to get our younger generations to channelize their anger and take the political process forward without playing into anyone’s hands; and persuaded me to consider whether education could be deployed as an effective tool in intergenerational family communication regarding sociocultural trauma.

We are empowered to take progressive initiatives to create platforms for the oppressed instead of wallowing in the maelstrom of sentimentality and falling prey to the hegemonic narratives of the state as well as insurgent

movements. While the “divisiveness” of historical and “cultural trauma” make it “difficult for the nation’s past to be fully comprehended by later generations, it ensures that “those memories are kept alive in a continuous struggle to imagine the nation’s future” (Hashimoto 141).

I am cognizant that to make trauma the focal point of a study to the exclusion of memory would, as Huyssen explains, lead to a denial of “human agency and lock us into compulsive repetition” (Huyssen 8). So, like Huyssen, I attempt, in this preface as well as the rest of the book, to not “collapse memory into trauma,” which “would unduly confine our understanding of memory, marking it too exclusively in terms of pain, suffering, or loss” (*ibid.*). We would do ourselves, as well as the communities with which we are affiliated with, an injustice by not exploring our “positive legacies” (Hamilton 276).

The purpose of this book is to couch pedagogy and the transformation of trauma in Jammu and Kashmir in international terms. The future of Jammu and Kashmir can no longer be bereft, as I emphasize in the rest of the book, of “education to overcome lingering hate and prejudice against inherited enemies; civil disobedience to redefine the norms of disobedience against authorities; and transnational institutional frameworks to maintain rules, solidarities, and dialogue among former adversaries” (Hashimoto 141). My disillusionment with the disintegration of democratic institutions, asphyxiation of civil society groups, and criminalization of civil forms of solidarity in Jammu and Kashmir would have overwhelmed me if my life hadn’t been touched by the work of activists, academics, and clinical practitioners in conflict and post-conflict zones likes South Africa, Lebanon, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Congo, South Sudan, Nigeria, Germany, and Greece. The people I am inspired by assiduously work, despite the lack of capacity to deal with trauma in the world, on restoring humanity. I am grateful to Charles Tauber of Coalition for Work with Psychotrauma and Peace; Father Michael Lansgley and Gloria Hage of the Institute of Healing for Memories; Alphonse Kanda of the Viktor Frankl Institute of Logotherapy for having shared their invaluable experiences and critical insights with me.

Writing a book is a journey on which I am accompanied by kindred souls. The power of the people who accompany me on that journey teaches me that “relationships are the most valuable form of capital” (Lapsley, e-mail to author, 17 August 2020). I owe my commitment to restorative work, in as well as outside the classroom, to some incredibly dedicated and insightful people in the Oklahoma community, who have

not given up on building bridges and addressing the atrocities of injustice even in politically threatening environments. William Tabbernee of the Oklahoma Conference of Churches; Suzette Chang of Thick Descriptions; Metta Spencer of Project Save the World; Ashis Nandy of the Senior Fellow and Former Director of the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS); Paul Mojzes of Christians Associated for Relationships with Eastern Europe and the Europe Forum of the National Council of Churches; Leonard Swidler of the Dialogue Institute; Betty J. Harris of the University of Oklahoma; Nourah Abdullah M. Alhawasi of the Princess Nourah Bint Abdul Rahman University in Riyadh; Tonnia Anderson of the Dr. Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher Center for Social Justice and Healing; and Krishna Misri of Maulana Azad College for Women in Srinagar, Kashmir. Melissa Huffman and Linda C. Dillner at the Rose State College Learning Resources Center for leaving no stone unturned to make the research material I required available to me. My editor, Alina Yurova, for giving me the time and space I needed to heal and work on my manuscript. Kudos to Subir Guin for not having shied away from the tedious task of indexing my book.

My students remain my greatest source of strength. I have several students who are trying to make ends meet in a world transformed by COVID-19. Some of them are now working two jobs, so they can pay their bills. Others are working hard to support those of their family members who have been furloughed. There are some who don't have Wifi access or erratic internet connections, and cannot participate in Zoom meetings as efficiently as they would like to. I see determination and perseverance in these young people. They push themselves to meet deadlines and step up to the plate. They have learned to see their challenges as opportunities to grow, and, as an academic, I am here for them. While the transition to online classes came with its set of challenges, my students did not throw in the towel. On the contrary, they adjusted to their new reality with a newfound confidence. My students and I were able to create a safe environment in which we examined our locations of privilege and sought emotional empowerment in order to understand systems that have generated a culture of silence about systemic discrimination.

I am grateful to my husband, Mohammad Faisal Khan, for his solicitude during my bereavement. My daughter Iman's creative rebelliousness and intransigence takes me back to my adolescence. Every time I am on the verge of being demoralized by current political realities, she reminds me that life is full of purpose and meaning.

Last but not least, I am thankful for the example of my mother, Suraiya Ali née Abdullah, who has always displayed immense stoicism and fortitude. She has the enviable quality to look on the brighter side of life, even in dismal conditions. Her ability to stand up to even the most challenging situations with dignity and quiet self-confidence does me proud!

As we learn to understand more and more about trauma and resilience, we grow by working through the challenges and give one another the gift of seeing strength in one another's narrative (Lapsley, 17 August 2020). It is my sincere belief that such understanding is only possible through the right kind of education. It is this belief that has motivated me to develop and present educational strategies for the transformation, not transmission, of trauma in conflict zones.

Edmond, USA

Nyla Ali Khan

PERMISSIONS

“CONTACT: Training a New Generation of Peacebuilders,” appended by kind permission of Dr. Paula Green, Founder and Co-Director of CONTACT.

“Creating Space, Restoring Humanity,” Program Evaluation Paper, appended by kind permission of the Institute for Healing of Memories—North America.

Excerpts from Nourah Abdullah M. Alhawasi’s e-mail to author, quoted by kind permission of Alhawasi.

Excerpts from Tonia Anderson’s e-mail to author, quoted by kind permission of Anderson.

Excerpts from Robert C. Barnes telephonic conversation with author, quoted by kind permission of Barnes.

Excerpts from Claudia Buckmaster’s e-mail to author, quoted by kind permission of Buckmaster.

Excerpts from Kelly Burns’s e-mail to author, quoted by kind permission of Burns.

Excerpts from Suzette Chang’s e-mail to author, quoted by kind permission of Chang.

Excerpts from Paula Green’s e-mail to author, quoted by kind permission of Green.

Excerpts from Ajay Gudavarthy’s e-mail to author, quoted by kind permission of Gudavarthy.

Excerpts from Betty J. Harris's e-mail to author, quoted by kind permission of Harris.

Excerpts from Alphonse Kanda's e-mail to author, quoted by kind permission of Alophonse.

Excerpts from Michael Langsley's e-mail to author, quoted by kind permission of Langsley.

Excerpts from Krishna Misri's e-mail to author, quoted by kind permission of Misri.

Excerpts from Paul Mojzes's e-mail to author, quoted by kind permission of Mojzes.

Excerpts from Ashis Nandy's e-mail to author, quoted by kind permission of Nandy.

Excerpts from Metta Spencer's e-mail to author, quoted by kind permission of Spencer.

Excerpts from Shreerekha Subramanian's e-mail to author, quoted by kind permission of Subramanian.

Excerpts from Leonard Swidler's e-mail to author, quoted by kind permission of Swidler.

Excerpts from William Tabbernee's e-mail to author, quoted by kind permission of Tabbernee.

Excerpts from Charles Tauber's e-mail to author, quoted by kind permission of Tauber.

LIST OF PREVIOUS PUBLICATIONS

Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah's Reflections on Kashmir (2018)
The Life of a Kashmiri Woman: Dialectic of Resistance and Accommodation (2014)
The Parchment of Kashmir: History, Society, and Polity (edited, 2012)
Islam, Women, and Violence in Kashmir: Between India and Pakistan (2009, 2010, and 2011)
The Fiction of Nationality in an Era of Nationalism (2005)

PRAISE FOR EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES FOR YOUTH EMPOWERMENT IN CONFLICT ZONES

“Dr. Nyla Ali Khan’s work illustrates just how important it is to have a multi-disciplinary approach to help facilitate youth empowerment in conflict zones. It is not only the academic, or the educator, but the citizenry themselves who will benefit from having multiple lenses to understand and change their reality. This book illustrates the importance of individual and social healing if a society is to transform itself and not simply continue cycles of hatred and revenge. Not surprisingly, her studies have found that a lot of therapeutic interventions are relevant in greatly varying context. This is simply because the search for meaning is common to all human beings. Healing is all the more difficult when people cannot make sense of why they are suffering. However, this book also shows the danger of failing to see the relationship between the political, economic, and social, on the one hand, and the psychological, emotional, and spiritual on the other. Dr. Nyla Ali Khan rightly rails against the hypocrisy and double-standards of the United States when it comes to questions of Human Rights. The studies of college students in the US with its social violence and addiction to war, illustrates that in reality there is a much greater level of commonality between young people in the US and young people in Jammu Kashmir. It is also important to assert that the pursuit of transformative Justice is also part of the journey of healing. This book will enrich both the understanding and practice of those working for justice and healing in her homeland and many other countries, including the United States. Thank you to Dr. Nyla Ali Khan for putting the spotlight

on the people of Jammu and Kashmir with their urgent need for both Justice and healing.”

—Father Michael Lapsley SSM, *Founder of the Institute for the Healing of Memories*

“Begun during her father’s final illness and death from lung cancer, Dr. Khan’s book resonates with the pain of his loss while she draws strength from his moral stature. She portrays their early family life as a peaceful idyll, before the tragedies of militarization and trauma in her native land of Jammu and Kashmir. Responding to the state of higher education in not only Kashmir but Africa and other non-western countries, as well as her deep experience teaching in the U.S., she inquires into the myriad ways to teach students who have experienced trauma in their lives because of military violence or social inequities. Primarily addressing faculty in non-Western countries, she looks into how best to help faculty teaching students who have experienced trauma in their societies.”

—Catherine Hobbs, *Professor Emeritus of English and Women’s and Gender Studies at the University of Oklahoma, Norman*

“Nyla Ali Khan studies ethno-cultural dynamics with familiarity, as the scion of a leading political family in Jammu and Kashmir. She explores the dilemma of all activists: how to combine a truthful expression of indignation with an openness toward offenders that enables progress toward reconciliation and mutuality. Dr. Khan has interviewed numerous others who have struggled successfully with the same issue—especially Blacks and Indigenous people in Africa and the United States. Her accounts may hearten today’s young activists, for they instantiate the sustaining of resilience and humanity.”

—Metta Spenser, *Professor Emeritus of Sociology at the University of Toronto, Canada*

“In her book, Dr. Nyla Ali Khan brings attention to areas that are mostly ignored in conflict transformation, namely the role of psychological traumatization and the trans-generational transmission of trauma. She also highlights the lack of capacity to deal with such trauma, and thus the need for new groups within particularly non-Northern non-Western societies to do this work. The emphasis on this work is critical, particularly in societies suffering from conflict, which are in a post-conflict period, and/or where there is the potential for violent conflict. Thus, Dr. Nyla

Ali Khan is doing a great service to humanity, in our view, by discussing these issues.”

—Dr. Charles Tauber, *CEO and Founder of* Coalition for Work with Psychotrauma and Peace

“In approaching Nyla Ali Khan’s new work, *Educational Strategies for Youth Empowerment in Conflict Zones: Transforming, Not Transmitting, Trauma*, we are confronted to take on the metaphysical history of the questions, ‘How do we treat others, in our town and around the world?’ and ‘Why is that treatment, when we observe it, so fraught with cruelty and ‘turbulence’ and ‘disruption,’ in Nyla’s own words? Dr. Khan’s spirit is one exactly to take on such a metaphysics and world wound. I can call her friend and share her love of teaching, but her work calls me more deeply to understand a world dialogue of Western paradigms fraught with trauma toward others, both native and global. She is asking that we see clearly pain and disruption of young lives through the East-West global dialogue of political trauma brought down hardest on the citizen, and harder yet on the young persons of our world. Her spirit is the educator, the historian, and the Kashmir patriot, who loves family, country, and the hurting. The combination of these gives Dr. Khan a special perspective from which to bring her pedagogy to force our own self-evaluation and to understand our connection or disconnection to the suffering worlds of our youth. As Dr. Khan takes on the hope for the democracy and humanity of Kashmir, she asks us to take on our own hope for democracy and humanity, reaching out for the other, in love, care, and understanding.”

—Steve Morrow, *Professor of English at Oklahoma City Community College*

“Dr. Nyla Ali Khan’s *Educational Strategies for Youth Empowerment in Conflict Zones: Transforming, Not Transmitting, Trauma* is a timely and much-needed book. In this book, Dr. Khan, in consultation with other scholars, educators, and professionals who are experts in dealing with trauma, presents practical tools for transforming, rather than perpetuating, such trauma. Dr. Khan rightly utilizes education as the means by which to provide not only contextual insights but helpful strategies to enable young people to deal with the trauma they encounter in some of the world’s greatest conflict zones. In her work on trauma in such conflict zones and the way in which education can be the means of

making trauma transformative rather than debilitating for generations, Dr. Khan calls on her own experience as a member of a prominent Kashmiri family, growing up in Jammu and Kashmir and continuing to have strong personal involvement in the socio-political struggles going on in the land of her birth. The death of her beloved father during the writing of this volume adds a level of empathy and understanding rarely seen in a rigorously researched academic, yet practical monograph. I am convinced that Dr. Khan's ground-breaking work will make an extremely positive difference to countless young people, their families, and communities in South Asia and beyond. Dr. Khan is to be applauded for seeing the need to write this book--and doing so!"

—William Tabbernee, PhD, *Executive Director Emeritus, Oklahoma Conference of Churches*

"Compelling! *Educational Strategies for Youth Empowerment in Conflict Zones* is an important scholarly guide for educators to empower traumatized youth to heal, in part, through storytelling. As the son of Holocaust survivors, I appreciate the importance of sharing one's story in order to heal. We see the historical and contemporaneous impact of trauma all over the world: ethnic cleansing in Cambodia, Bosnia, and Rwanda; recent racially charged violence in Kenosha, Wisconsin where children watched their father being shot seven times by the police; the racial policies of South Africa that disenfranchised and harmed Black Africans for centuries. We must know where our societies have been in order to move forward. Empathy and healing begin with sacred listening -- when stories are heard."

—Michael Korenblit, *author of UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN*

"Investing in a child's developing mind is a crucial undertaking in our world, as all humanity will soon depend on today's youth. Parents, schools, communities, and nations often see the future payoff of their young citizens economically or politically. When they under-nourish or completely avoid the necessary fostering of their critical thinking, agency, and connectedness to the world around them, a paramount set of skills can be lost in those youth. This book, therefore, is of critical importance. Dr. Khan has lived, learned, and written about complex social considerations in societies fraught with internal and external pressures as well as histories of dehumanization of 'the other.' She brings all her knowledge and previous work to the table. The world must no longer be divided into East

and West, good and bad, developed and undeveloped, ‘us’ and ‘them.’ Media and political rhetoric may promote that harmful thinking, as our increasing connectedness via technology can be used to further divide and foment conflict. But the ceaseless work of experts like Dr. Khan can help our future leaders heal and bridge divides. This book contains necessary background and concrete steps toward engagement and civic building through proven methods like story-telling and comparative learning. It is a must read for those who believe, as I do, that we have everything we need for a better, more equitable, and peaceful world tomorrow in our youth, who are worth every effort to nurture.”

—Dr. Noel Jacobs, *Child Psychologist and Community Builder*

“Blending the intellectual rigor of a strategy of comparison, with the passion of a compelling personal narrative that begins in Jammu and Kashmir, this book is a clarion call for the collective societal healing of generational trauma. Nyla Ali Khan’s new book delves into the pedagogy of healing and liberation from trauma, beyond the paradigm of a near-exclusive focus on the west. Harnessing a decolonial lens, Khan weaves together insights from trauma theory, largely informed by Holocaust studies, with testimonial accounts of the horrors of war, sexual violence, and the victimization of otherized minority groups, calling on our collective empathy and morality to ‘actively work to rehabilitate those who have witnessed or encountered acts of barbarity or savagery.’ Focusing in particular on the ‘the heterogeneity of the identities and histories of children’ suffering from mental and emotional trauma, she rejects “the propagation of sentimental political discourse that iconizes” trauma victims, instead offering an urgent and necessary lens—as well as paving a path—to healing and building flourishing democratic societies.”

—Diana J. Fox, *Ph.D. Professor of Anthropology, Founder/Editor Journal of International Women’s Studies, Bridgewater State University*

“Human rights do not come easily even in societies that acknowledge democratic values. Realizing this, and that ‘the process of democratization is an evolutionary one and does not provide instant solutions,’ Dr. Nyla Ali Khan turns her remarkable life experiences and intrepid scholarship to examine the effects of trauma on this evolution and the future of societies that have or have had specific experiences with trauma. The importance of healing trauma and the hopelessness and despair that it fomenters cannot be overstated. Dr. Khan’s bracing inquiries provide exciting and novel

directions, especially for young people who will soon decide their as well as our futures.”

—Dr. Robert Henry, *former Attorney General of Oklahoma and immediate past President of Oklahoma City University (OCU)*

CONTENTS

1	Introduction	1
2	Determining the Separation Between Perpetrator and Victim: Importance of Intergenerational Family Communication	15
3	In the Arena of Textbook Wars, Education Can Be Deployed to Build Common Ground Between Opposing Forces	29
4	Empowering Pedagogy: Dialogue and Building Common Ground	41
5	Education Conscientizes About Social and Political Conditions	61
6	Participatory Educational Methodology; Healing of Memories; Logotherapy	77
7	Finding Purpose and Meaning in the Sturm and Drang of the Unredressed Agonies of the Past	101

8 Conclusion	113
Appendix I	121
Appendix II	175
Bibliography	185
Index	195



Introduction

In the sessions on “critical thinking skills” in my classes, I remind my students that we expeditiously denounce human rights violations in those parts of the world that are governed by rulers who are anathema to the US government, while discounting torture and prisoner abuse scandal, which are just as egregious, that are committed either by American soldiers or governments and militaries that are indomitable allies of the US government. Do we, for instance, diminish the gravity of the lack of women’s rights in Saudi Arabia, while providing the credo of “women’s liberation” as the rationale for the invasion of Afghanistan post 9/11? Do we ignore the alliance of the US government with Saddam Hussein’s dictatorial regime in Iraq in the 1980s? Do we gloss over the lack of legitimacy of the Iraq invasion? As Historian John W. Dower points out, “The speed, arrogance, and indifference with which Washington dissipated the global sympathy and support that followed September 11 is breathtaking in this regard. ... Saddam was a brutal dictator, but this did not suffice to give the so-called lesser evil of invading and occupying his country legitimacy” (320). Sociologist Akiko Hashimoto sees a similar apathy or willful ignorance to “the enemy dead in wars from the Vietnam War to the Iraq War” in Japan as well. She attributes it to a “national attempt” in Japan “to keep its dead soldiers innocent” (81). Do we disregard the severe oppression and traumatization of Kurds in Iraq during that era? Are we in denial about the genocide of Native Americans in North America? Do we look

for red herrings to divert our attention from the blots on the United States' own history? How many people in the United States would be able to locate Kashmir on the map?

As I've argued elsewhere, the line of demarcation between neoconservatives and neoliberals in the United States is thinner than most people realize ("An Interventionist Foreign Policy Blurs Lines of Demarcation"). In terms of interventionist politics, foreign policy, and being harbingers of peace through preemptive strikes, the two have much in common. It would be gauche to assume that US foreign policy is determined by elected representatives without the intervention of the military and intelligence community. And it would be just as naïve to assume that if Democrats come to power in November 2020, international conflict zones, like Jammu and Kashmir, would find their way out of the labyrinth of militarization.

Has the plight of those craving a world in which social justice, political enfranchisement, cultural pride, and self-realization are the order of the day in the non-Western world been ignored? Has their yearning for a world in which the living tradition of legends, myths, fables of yore, is resuscitated, reviving their imaginative life been negated? In the greatly circumscribed "narrative public space" of conflict and war-torn zones, have multigenre and layered narratives, which would provide a much needed breath of fresh air, been smothered? Has the need for interdisciplinary interventions that could potentially bridge racial, ethnic, religiocultural, and political divides not been understood? (Khan, "Seeking Solomon's Wisdom: Reflections of a Daughter of Kashmir from the Land of Oklahoma").

In a world that continues to be carved up into the false binary of West vs. East, there is an abundance of scholarly work on trauma, healing, and rebuilding solidarities in Europe and the United States, but a dearth of such scholarly work and literature about regions in South Asia, mainland Africa, and sub-Saharan Africa. As Rebecca Saunders, author of *Lamentation and Modernity in Literature, Philosophy and Culture*, observes "While trauma theory has primarily been produced in Europe or the United States, trauma itself has, with equal if not greater regularity and urgency, been experienced elsewhere" (Saunders 15). Referencing American literary critic Shoshana Felman's chapter in *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History*, Stef Craps, Director of Cultural Memory Studies Initiative at Ghent University, observes that Felman sporadically employs the expression "history as holocaust" (95,

105), but her work focuses “almost” entirely on the Holocaust, disregarding the disrepair and deterioration of other histories and societies that were/are insidiously pervaded with trauma. He further observed that although the final chapter of *Testimony* has a part entitled “Heart of Darkness,” which is the title of Joseph Conrad’s anti-colonial and anti-imperial novel about the “Congo Free State,” Felman employs that title to invoke Nazi barbarities while taking no account of the bestiality of colonial rule irrevocable suffering caused by it in non-Western countries (10).

In this book, my purpose is to call attention to non-Western societies, “beyond what might be considered the geographical bounds of a western paradigm,” that are fractured and traumatized, and that will continue to sabotage themselves unless they actively engage in the process of healing (Edkins 9–10). It is also my purpose to employ the “strategy of comparison” between traumatic histories “in order to forge links” among those “histories” that would raise the “historical” consciousnesses of peoples “and promote their sense of civic responsibility” (Ball 15). The discourse of human rights, as I underline in my classes, does not have the universality that it should. As anthropologists Didier Fassin and Richard Rechtman point out, “the social processes of the recognition of persons as traumatized effectively chooses its victims. Although those who promote the concept assert that it is universal, since it is a mark left by an event, study reveals tragic disparities in its use” (282). While several non-Western nations have been mangled and pummeled by discord, and some constituencies in the West have been “Otherized,” they are not all “regarded” as potentially grievable, and hence ..., are made to bear ... differential exposure to violence and death” (Butler 25). After quoting Judith Butler on the unethicity and “precarity” of the politicization of the discourse of human rights, Craps fittingly argues that “the sufferings of those belonging to non-Western or minority cultures must be given due recognition” (13).

While I admit that I have greatly benefitted from the exploration of issues of trauma in Holocaust literature and testimony, my purpose is not to give greater space or credence to “Euro-American events and experiences.” On the contrary, my attempt is to highlight the heterogeneity of the identities and histories of children of the victims as well as survivors of the Holocaust. There is, nonetheless, much to learn from “qualitative” and “interpretive” studies of “survivors and their children, and the making of Holocaust consciousness” (186). Members of various victim groups can communicate with one another and learn about strategies

of healing psychological traumas in parts of the world that have been degraded by the instruments of militarization, increasing influence of the military in civilian affairs, normalization of sexual violence, insidiousness of institutional discrimination, hegemonic narratives of the state as well as insurgent movements, dehumanizing effect of incarceration and custodial torture, and those having difficulty reengaging with society. We learn to recognize cultural traumas, which occur “when members of a collective feel they have been subjected to a horrendous event that leave indelible marks upon their group consciousness, not because it is in some way naturally ineffaceable but because it generates a structure of discourse that normalizes it in collective life over time” (1). Cultures that internalize those negative historical events are motivated to “overcome the emotions and sentiments that accompany them,” which include “the desire to repair a damaged reputation; the aspiration to recover respect in the eyes of the world; the wish to mourn losses and recover from censure; the longing to find meaning and dignity in the face of failure; the hope to shield family and relatives from recrimination; and the urge to minimize the event and pretend it never happened (Hashimoto 5).

To that end, the study of trauma stories of Holocaust survivors has enabled me to study the effects of intergenerational trauma in families of victims as well as perpetrators. It has also enabled me to examine the inculcation of those traumas into the collective consciousness of Jewish people and revival of the agential capacities of a once oppressed people to engage with history from a perspective that empowers them. This inquiry has enriched my repertoire in educational strategies for empowerment in embattled zones. In my emphasis on employing such strategies for transforming, not transmitting, trauma in international conflict zones, I am not, by any means, glossing over the politically oppressive, socially disparaging, or economically disempowering conditions that cause traumas. Nor am I negating the enormous toll that systemic discrimination can take on the collective psyche of a people. I have remained firm in my belief that the restoration of human rights, revival of democratic voices, racial justice, and inclusion cannot be brought about without curative, not mere palliative, methods. Algerian psychiatrist, Frantz Fanon, for instance, emphasized that the discrimination encountered by the black man in colonized nations was responsible for his alienation and debilitating neurosis:

... it is apparent to me that the effective disalienation of the black man entails an immediate recognition of social and economic realities. If there is an inferiority complex, it is the outcome of a double process:

- primarily economic;
- subsequently, the internalization---or, better, the epidermalization---of the inferiority. (10–11)

Illuminating the connection between “individual alienation” and “political alienation,” Fanon offers the caveat that a “soul” cannot be salvaged without actively working to transform the social, political, and economic conditions that are responsible for its neurosis (*ibid.*). The persecution that oppressed races have been subjected to has spread its tentacles into political, sociocultural, and economic institutions, causing a cognitive dissonance.

But, I would argue, that while waiting for those conditions to change, peoples of nations that are governed by despot or draconian laws cannot refuse to hold themselves accountable. While “problems that are essentially political, social, or economic” cannot be “medicalized,” nor can the “people affected by them” be “pathologized as victims without agency, sufferers that can be cured through psychological counseling” (Craps 28), it is empowering for people in conflict zones to create racial healing within themselves and their communities. It is just as validating to create spaces where they can heal and perceive themselves as agents of change, and recognize their duty, as Fanon reminded us, of “not renouncing” our “freedom” through our “choice” (229). By advocating for the alleviation of psychological illnesses, I am not nullifying the need for the revival of indigenous institutions and political redress. Nor is the purpose of my emphasis on practical empowerment training, healing of memories, and logotherapy to characterize the genuine grievances of besieged peoples as psychological imbalances. But I have serious qualms about the regressive preoccupation with the propagation of sentimental political discourse that iconizes victims of trauma. Such discourse commodifies, but does not change, the misery of a father who feels emasculated because he cannot fend for his family. It does not alleviate the anxiety of parents who are painfully aware that the productive years of their child are going by the wayside while the rest of the world is making strides. It does not enable political change that would compensate for the wailing of a tender-hearted mother whose son was waiting to plunge into life but has now been silenced by militarization. It does not enable emancipation that

would give hope to the apathetic young educated person who thought the world was his/her oyster but now has nothing to look forward to. It does not provide a progressive political vision to people whose opinions are made short shrift of by the powers that be. It does not revive cultural and educational institutions that have been languishing in isolation. It does not enable the political assertion of people, who are wooed during election season, but whose opinions and rights are otherwise overlooked. On the contrary, such discourse, I would argue, turns peaceful protests and unarmed protestors who are fired at into mere objects of lamentation, and portrays the act of lamenting as “social deathmaking” (Berlant 307). In seeking to highlight an emancipatory pedagogical methodology that enables the articulation of ethical and political change, I consider the transnational application of therapies that are, conventionally, considered Eurocentric. For instance, logotherapist Alphonse Kanda’s work in South Africa validates the applicability of logotherapy in a disrupted and battle-scarred part of the world. He writes, “In my experience in a psychiatric clinic of a government district hospital in rural South Africa, clients can actively engage in the healing process within their objective reality where meaning as a calling is located” (“Argument for Logotherapy in Rural African Setting” 22). I posit that the methodologies and therapies I have engaged with in this book facilitate “acknowledging and working through historical losses” (LaCapra, *Writing History* 44).

The “freedom” that several debased and dehumanized communities yearn for will remain a distant dream until we begin to think constructively about change within organizations and institutions. The project a repairing a damaged and “broken society” is work in progress. In this rehabilitative and “recovery project, memories are realigned and reproduced---to heal, bring justice, and regain moral status in the world---with varying degrees of success” (Hashimoto 5). A collective identity cannot be forged nor can a future be envisioned without engaging with our historical past. Historical truths are not immutable nor are they “uniform.” How can fissures created by “historical representations” that have become “subjective, political projects” in several parts of the world, including Jammu and Kashmir, be healed? Can the purported permanent damage to “people’s lives and bodies” in conflict zones be ameliorated? In reconstructing a society and rebuilding a nation, I consider it important to “take account of the sentiments, values, and motivations of ordinary people, not only decision-makers and intellectual elites” (*ibid.*, 18–19). To that end, I examine the healing of “national” and regional “memories

of difficult pasts in various parts of the world “internalized by those who long to repair and recover from that legacy” (*ibid.*, 19).

Young people, as I’ve reiterated several times, need to be reminded that despite the several letdowns, the process of democratization is an evolutionary one and does not provide instant solutions. In our zeal to be flag bearers of revolutionary movements, I would argue, we forget the importance of facilitating the healing of trauma survivors, helping them “anchor and stabilize individual and collective identity while repairing biographical wounds, and avoid threatening political entanglement with the outside world” (Hashimoto 47). Communities cannot be revived and nations cannot be rebuilt unless we actively work to rehabilitate those who have witnessed or encountered acts of barbarity or savagery; rebuild trust within and between communities; encourage young adults to acknowledge and celebrate heterogeneity; enrich learning environments where young people embrace authenticity and forge social cohesion; laud them for building up leadership abilities; and train them to participate in decision-making processes. It also becomes necessary to encourage discussion on the role of individual responsibility; increase awareness that the enjoyment of rights works in tandem with the shouldering of responsibilities; and enhance the emotional ability of young people to contribute to the repair of their communities, nations, and themselves. While not allowing ourselves to be overwhelmed by the overload of information that threatens to engulf lives, we would do well to remind ourselves that local communities exercise prodigious influence in the restoration of humanity.

To that end, this book, in taking multidisciplinary approaches to major human rights issues, is a dynamic interplay between activists, academics, and clinicians. I have chosen to stay true to their ideas and words by reproducing them verbatim. I recognize the imperative of engaging with people in local communities, building on the resilience displayed by those communities in the wake of humanitarian disasters, and incorporating communitarian coping strategies into educational methodologies that seek to empower such communities. I have had the privilege of connecting and engaging with social justice activists, academics, and clinicians in the United States, South Africa, Canada, the Balkans, and Jammu and Kashmir who in their work with diverse communities have interrogated “hegemonic definitions of trauma” and healing, and have developed nuanced concepts of “local coping strategies” to effectively heal trauma (Craps 21, 23). They efficaciously train citizens to seek creation of non-militarized, non-militant, and humane environments to ensure the

rights of citizens to peacefully protest and to be heard by their political representatives.

An environment that ensures all citizens that they have a voice and that their voices will not go unheard must be created. In any society, when people are in survival mode and trying to avoid being criminalized, to the extent that they are unable to participate in their governments, forces of power, greed, and special interests take over. Bigotry and hate are at the root of this violence (Khan, "Realpolitik Relegates Human Rights to the Background"). I would argue that it in such situations it becomes necessary to "think about ... the legitimate means of resistance to a military machine at war, such as conscientious objection to serve the military, disobeying illegal orders of superiors, questioning the use of excessive military force, and protecting the rights of civilians and soldiers guaranteed by international conventions in times of war" (Hashimoto 48). The current state of affairs in several parts of the world, including Jammu and Kashmir, is challenging, so it is crucial to have spaces of inclusion and pluralism within which citizens of all ages, but especially young people, can productively contribute to the rebuilding of their society through dialogue (Khan, "Realpolitik Relegates Humans Rights to the Background").

How damaging is mental and emotional trauma, particularly when it is intergenerational? Can a family/community that is riven apart by grief and outrage and grief provide a sounding board? Can education be deployed as an effective tool in intergenerational family communication regarding sociocultural trauma? After having written extensively on the political, historical, and sociocultural issues of Jammu and Kashmir, I realized that while it was all very well to delve into these matters of import, how I, as an educator, could encourage students to engage with writings on traumas that young people experience in the volatile and highly charged atmosphere of various conflict zones. Every time I broach the topic of trauma in the classes I teach at institutions of higher education in the United States, I discern how well some students connect with the discussions because of their own agonizing encounters with human-created or natural disasters. My attempt is not to obscure the line between trauma in a non-militarized environment and mourning in a beleaguered and highly militarized one. Shannon E. Cusack et al., reported the pervasion of trauma in the lives of college students who collected data from a sample group of 2, 310 students who "completed a survey assessing for relevant variables at the beginning of fall

semester 2014 and during the spring semester 2015,” seventy percent of the students reported having suffered “at least one potentially traumatic event (PTE).” Subsequent to the incoming freshmen filling out a survey that was designed to evaluate the “relevant variables at the beginning of fall semester and during the spring semester, the data was collected by the researchers. The stress criteria for post-traumatic stress disorder was met by 34.4% of the individuals in the sample group. Melancholia, uneasiness, disquietude in girls/women were associated with PTSD. This was a university-wide study. (123–131). According to Samantha Lauriello, in a more recent 2018 survey conducted by the American College Health Association (ACHA), students reported that “their academic performance” was “negatively” impacted by “anxiety and depression.” “Forty-two percent of participants” in that survey admitted that “they had felt so depressed in the past year” that “it was difficult for them to function” (<https://www.health.com/condition/depression/anxiety-depression-college-university-students>). Founder of International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies, Charles R. Figley, notes the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (Third Edition)*

Includes the diagnosis of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), which views

common symptoms experienced by a wide variety of traumatized persons as a

psychiatric disorder; one that can be accurately diagnosed and treated. PTSD,

therefore, represents the latest in a series of terms that describes the harmful

biopsychosocial effects of emotionally traumatic events. ... the PTSD diagnosis

has been applied widely in mental health research and practice to people traumatized by one of many types of traumatic events and has influenced case

law and mental health conception.

I consider it pertinent to point out that several researchers are hard-pressed to observe that the definition of a traumatic stressor, which could potentially cause PTSD, in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* marginalizes “the normative, quotidian aspects of trauma in the lives of many oppressed and disempowered persons, leading

psychotherapists to an inability to grasp how a particular presentation of client distress is in fact posttraumatic” (Brown 18).

In 2015, Médecins Sans Frontières or Doctors Without Borders conducted a survey in Kashmir the results of which were as follows: out of “5600 households selected from more than 400 villages in 10 districts 1.8 million adults (45% of the adult population) are experiencing symptoms of mental distress with 41% exhibiting symptoms of probable depression 26% probable anxiety and 19% probable PTSD” (qtd. in Aqeel, Sayed et al.). The results clearly “indicated” that “on average an adult in the Kashmir valley” had either “witnessed or experienced 7.7” devastating “events during his/her lifetime.” Having suffered so many distressing experiences, people were prone to “depression, anxiety, and PTSD” (ibid.). Based on these data, an educator, psychologist, or workshop facilitator working in a conflict riven region like Jammu and Kashmir can make the safe assumption that a large number of students/young adults would be trauma survivors. It is in such precarious situations that the discretion of the educator comes into play. Would it be wise to encourage students to reveal experiential evidence of traumas that they may have encountered and suffered to their peers or not?

Psychologist Susan L. McCammon delved into the benefits of students revealing their traumatic experiences of their own volition. Borrowing from Inger Agger and S. B. Jensen, she highlights the “therapeutic value” to “trauma survivors” of providing testimonial evidence. Young people can be encouraged to reframe their traumas in order to place them within a “political and social context” (110). Their traumatic experiences then become stories of strength through enabling them to change their languages, understanding their geographical and spatial spaces, and committing themselves to building a new society based on transformative justice. Subsequently, a trauma survivor transitions from being the wounded and mutilated person to the impactful and constructive raconteur. In verbalizing the hitherto ineluctable brunt that the survivor has borne, she/he breaks through the walls of self-imposed isolation. “Shame and guilt,” as Cammon observes, “can be expressed and reframed” (ibid.).

In all my years of teaching in the North American academy, I have realized that students relate best to the materials they study if these materials are corroborated with testimonial evidence and discussed as stories of human interest. Stories about the tumult of war; devastation caused by fanatical hordes of people who lack an ideological foundation; distress that soldiers who are deployed in hostile territories encounter; the strain

of readjusting to family and a regular job that returning soldiers, who have witnessed the unspeakable horrors of war, face, became relatable when they are told by those students of mine who are war veterans. Stories about the objectification of women in the domestic and public realms; infantilization of women in churches that do not consider them fit for leadership roles; criminalization of female sexuality and justification of misogynistic control; the raw wounds of women who have been physically and emotionally abused by their intimate partners; the impairment of women who have been treated as mere chattel; the dreadfulness and mutilating effects of child sexual abuse are best understood when related by those students of mine who have either witnessed or borne such traumas. Stories about the harassment and discrimination encountered by the LGBTQ community; denial of the right to a dignified existence faced by members of that community; the damage caused to a person's sense of self-worth by the denigration of her/his race or ethnicity; the damage caused by the internalization of stories that "otherize" minorities; the paranoia of Muslim women who fear that their traditional garb will cause them to be marginalized become more palpable when told by those of my students who have been impacted by these realities.

However, not every difficult disclosure receives the validation it deserves (Janoff-Bulman). Someone's story of trauma and victimization might push the listeners' buttons and trigger discomfiture and anxiety. Listeners might feel personally assaulted by stories that threaten their worldviews or beliefs that they have nurtured their entire lives. They might also feel vulnerable by narratives that challenge them to reflect on their allegiances and loyalties to nation, tribe, race, or ethnic group. While survivors of trauma transform their vulnerabilities into strength and make a giant leap toward healing when they disclose secrets that have been gnawing at them, not everyone, as I observed, responds with an open-mind to such revelations.

I would underscore that as educators, we can encourage

A heightened sensitivity and enhanced empathy for the suffering of victims, resulting in a deeper sense of connection with others ... a deep sense of hopefulness about the capacity of human beings to endure, overcome, and even transform their traumatic experiences; and a more realistic view of the world, through the integration of the dark side of humanity with healing images. (McCann and Pearlman 147)

The purpose of encouraging honest and uninhibited discussions in the classroom is to work through experiences that have prevented students from reaching their full potential. I have come across young people in the United States and South Asia who have had to deal with more than their fair share of loss, bereavement, and trauma. Spaces in which they could express themselves without fear of reprisal have shrunk. They are distraught and have a diminished sense of self that undermines their pride. They mourn the loss of values that they had thought would buoy them up for eternity. They are disheartened by the looming sense that every political decision about their future will be presented to them as a *fait accompli*. The impairment and deterioration caused by political, economic, and social crises is greater than we might want to admit. Unless deliberate and well thought-out attempts are made to rectify this damage by enabling the healing of trauma survivors in tandem with the struggle for political rights, the buzzwords of “freedom,” “self-determination,” and “revolution,” will not restore the well-being of a society. I would recommend “a trauma-informed approach to justice,” in order to revive restorative justice, which would “build in supports and seek to repair the harm rather than just punish the wrongdoer” (Bargen).

In this era of abstract political and moral discourse, people often turn a blind eye to the importance of community and institution building, particularly in regions upon which havoc has been wreaked by violent conflict. As I’ve said elsewhere, sloganeering, rabble rousing, demanding the incorporation of articles in constitutions, being paper tigers, and other theoretical issues are all very well, but the real test is whether these theories have a real impact on civil society, instead of being just hollow words (“The Dangers of Extremism”). So, disparaging the importance of repairing the sociocultural fabric of traumatized and brutalized communities would be highly irresponsible. Michael Lapsley of the Institute for Healing of Memories in post-apartheid South Africa reminded me that conflict is not unique to Jammu and Kashmir, which is why it is important to find the particularities and commonalities with other conflicts and survivors of traumas caused by those discordant situations (E-mail to author, 17 August 2020).

Those who have been in the political arena for a long time must recognize that there is no politics without negotiation. And the ultimate negotiating authority is always the citizens. Real democracies thrive on differences of opinions, not on gagging those who might not be on the same page. As I’ve said previously, the relationship of the only (up until

now) Muslim Majority state within India was contingent on the depth of Indian democracy. We, the people of Jammu and Kashmir, will not falter from our ideal even if we are left alone in this great battle for democracy and humanity (“Revival of Democratic and Civil Society Institutions in Jammu and Kashmir”).



Determining the Separation Between Perpetrator and Victim: Importance of Intergenerational Family Communication

Why must we confront our own histories, which would require dredging up the past? Psychoanalyst Helm Stierlin observes that “if we wish to maintain our mental and spiritual health” and reconcile with our history, “we must undertake a search for meaning” (143). In order to uncover that meaning, it is necessary to encourage dialogue between generations. With the world in a state of social flux and changing geopolitical realities, dialogue “between the generations becomes more difficult and at the same time more urgent than ever” (ibid., 144). While working with families in Germany that had a Nazi past, Stierlin observed two points of view when confronting this past. He notes that within the first framework, people were overwhelmed by unwieldy and uncontrollable colossal events. They did not perceive themselves as having been active agents in those historical events, which had brought about unforeseen and cataclysmic changes in their lives. On the contrary, they saw themselves as “victims, sufferers, or survivors in an historic drama,” in which they had played no role and for which they bore no burden. This perspective enabled people to disavow any obligation or responsibility and portray themselves as victims of circumstances. By tenaciously clinging to this position, people washed their hands off any guilt they might suffer from, and could repose faith in a higher deity.

Stierlin underlines the line of demarcation between this perspective and the second one, within which people saw themselves as having exercised

greater agency. The stance that individuals and families took during those historical events; their contribution to the progression of those events; their responsibility in having either dehumanized those on the other side of the aisle, or having shunned savagery and barbarity out of deference to human dignity. "In one case," he points out, "people reveal themselves as passive sufferers; in the other as active shapers of their own past lives." In order to study the past holistically, it is necessary to study it through both perspectives. The first perspective enables us to examine the histories of our families, or communities, and our peoples. It allows us to analyze the multiple layers of our subjectivities. The other perspective enables us to inquire into "which values, loyalties, and tasks determined" our lives and impacted our identity formation (*ibid.*, 149–151). Whenever I ask my students to locate themselves, I encourage them to choose the second perspective, giving them a greater sense of responsibility, accountability, and agency.

Calamitous and tumultuous events impair the conditions that are necessary for the stable upbringing and growth of young people. The psychological impact of conflict, insurgency, war, and counterinsurgency are frequently catastrophic. Writing about the young adult patients he treated in the 1970s, Stierlin tells us that most of them grew up without fathers, who were geographically and physically removed from them fighting in wars launched by Hitler. These young adults were deprived of paternal love and care in their childhoods and adolescences. Several of the fathers died in wars, rendering their widows and orphans destitute. Others were severely wounded or returned home after having been held captive for several years. They returned broken, damaged, denuded of a sense of pride and dignity. Historically, during wars and conflicts, gender roles have changed, and women have had to take on responsibilities traditionally associated with male heads of households. In the absence of their spouses, "many women had to take over additional responsibilities, for example running the family farm or business, and thereby suffered even more loneliness, uncertainty, and sexual frustration" (*ibid.*, 147). In the absence of male heads of households, mothers invested completely in their children and expected them to fulfill their ambitions and dreams, which had been annihilated by conflict and war. The demands placed on such children were not in proportion to their age, but due to the realization that they were indispensable to their mothers. Other children were treated as pariahs. Regardless of whether they were treated as pariahs or made to feel indispensable, their emotional development was seriously impaired.

Several studies of children and grandchildren of former inmates of concentration camps in the Nazi era as well as successive generations of perpetrators of the horrific crimes of that era, for example, have shown that they were just as traumatized (*ibid.*, 147–148; Sigal). The ability of former perpetrators of those crimes to take responsibility for their inhumane acts, and to show regret over the destruction they had helped come about would determine the strength of the bonds they would build with posterity, and whether or not those relationships would be evocative of trust. Along with Stierlin, I would argue that mythological tales and a worldview that define the “prevailing interpersonal and political realities in a new way” are disseminated not just by the state, but by non-state actors as well. By accepting the perspective that works for them, people “immunize themselves against guilt feelings” (149). But detaching from reality; placing the entire onus on abstract notions such as “Higher Power” and “Fate”; portraying themselves as pawns who cannot be held accountable, because they were buffeted by the winds of fate; and passing the buck by claiming that they were obligated to do their duty, however sadistic that duty may have been, makes it challenging to build trust and to ensure the success of confidence-building measures in conflict and post-conflict periods.

Can healing for victims of the terrors of insurgency and counterinsurgency ever be complete? In order to heal the wounds caused by brutalization of societies, it is important for individuals, families, and communities to converge to consider and reconstruct their identities as survivors, aggressors, passive observers, and pave a path toward a constructive future. Sociologist Nina Eliasoph notes that in the process of reconstructing our identities when faced with challenging situations we cultivate feelings of helplessness and victimhood. This attitude enables people in a conflictual situation to protect themselves and to avoid taking the blame in order to faultlessly navigate relationships (621). For instance, aggressive statements, delusions of grandeur, melodramatic performances, and witty quips of politicians, journalists, and bureaucrats are a way of glossing over the pain of anxious parents, destitute widows, bereaved mothers, vulnerable orphans, and inability of educated people to make a decent living. This narrative underlines the powerlessness of people in the face of attempts of war machineries of nation-states to mold collective subjectivities, particularly by the evocation of pan-national religious affinities. I, like Hashimoto, believe that highlighting impotent and “powerless

suffering as the main event of one's war experience is [can be] a defensive stance" (Hashimoto 32).

An instantiation of this powerlessness is as follows: Kashmiris mourn the revocation of semi-autonomous status of Jammu and Kashmir as well as the subsequent removal of the state flag on August 5, 2019. Prime Minister Modi's government made the unilateral decision to revoke Article 370, which guaranteed the special status of Jammu and Kashmir; dismembered the State, and diminished it to two union territories. Although I would argue that these measures were flagrant violations of the sovereign Constitution of India, but how many politicians, activists, academics, and civil society actors of Jammu and Kashmir think about the damage wreaked by their inability to listen to one another? How many of them mourn their unwillingness or inability to bridge regional and religious divides in Jammu and Kashmir? As I've said elsewhere, the ideology and rhetoric of a shared cultural and historical past between the three regions of Jammu and Kashmir—Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladakh—were not able to garner public support and mobilization for reconstruction and nation-building. The signifiers of nationhood in the former state—flag, anthem, and constitution—were not able to move beyond a nebulous nationalist self-imagining. The political acts of demanding the right of self-determination and autonomy for J & K were not able to nurture a unity among all socioeconomic classes, but, on the contrary created unbridgeable gulfs. I have rarely seen civilian narratives in Kashmir that interrogate the reasons behind our inability to construct a shared cultural and historical legacy that would enable us to create a cultural alterity to that of the Indian nationalist or Pakistani nationalist one? When a historical or political narrative does not encourage "a society to scrutinize itself, asking what related tensions may be in play, and how some errors of the past might be avoided in dealing with them," the result is that "we stop criticizing our own society, asking what tensions it contains.... We are also encouraged to not scrutinize ourselves, asking ourselves what seeds of violence and domination our own lives contain" (Nussbaum 237). Since 1989, most people turned a blind eye to regional sentiments that were becoming increasingly religionized. I would argue that the slogan of self-determination took on a religious hue, which is not how it was supposed to be. Among the Dogra Hindu populace of Jammu and the Buddhist populace of Ladakh, the slogan of self-determination was perceived as exclusionary and insensitive to the diversities and divergences in the state

(Khan, “For Once Ask Not What Kashmir Can Do For You; Ask What You Can Do For Kashmir”).

I have also emphasized in my earlier work that we cannot restore our state or our national identity on unquenchable hate for either India or Pakistan and certainly not on cashing in on the pain and grief of our Kashmiri people. I underline that a political movement that pays insufficient attention to the welfare of the populace, good governance, and rebuilding democratic institutions ends up leaving irreparable destruction in its wake. While focusing on the building and legitimization of a collective political identity, some political and militant nationalist movements make the grave error of turning a blind eye to the vitriol of corruption and inefficiency in the administrative set-up and educational institutions, which is exactly what the political movement of the past quarter of a century has done (*ibid.*). While not condoning the atrocities of militarization, do we need to introspect where we lost the plot? Did we delude ourselves into believing that we could put the onus for all our problems on others? Were we so enmeshed in our chosen traumas and distorting history that we didn’t see our role in exacerbating damaging divides?

Several civilian testimonies that one comes across in war-torn regions are about powerless individuals whose agential capacities were wrecked by the state and its appendages. These narratives bespeak a guilelessness and unworldliness. They rarely express a tinge of remorse at having been drawn to a movement that brought annihilation in its wake, or at having been part of a belligerent effort to create hegemonic narratives of insurgencies, which were as oppressive as some mainstream narratives. Then there are other civilian narratives that glorify the role of belligerent military personnel in stifling voices perceived as seditious. In keeping with my purpose of couching the fallout of the upheaval in Jammu and Kashmir in international terms, I would argue that an analogy can be drawn between sociologist Hashimoto’s analogy of the role that women’s testimonies played as a “significant part of Japan’s memory culture” and the role that civilian testimonies play in other beleaguered parts of the world, including Kashmir (34). Memorializing military personnel, or militants, or militias is a complex task, because while all these entities inflicted atrocities, they were also sons, husbands, and fathers who cannot be repudiated (*ibid.*, 34).

In order to negotiate murky histories and heal wounds, children and grandchildren construct positive images of their family members in terms of their uprightness, morality, and bravery (Sturken). Elaborating on

the construction of narratives that would enable younger generations to repair, thereby, rehabilitate their ancestors whose hands had been bloodied in conflict or war, Hashimoto references German psychologists Harald Welzer, Sabine Moller, and Karoline Tschuggnall, who delved into the history of national socialist crimes during the Nazi era and the subsequent attempts of grandchildren to come to terms with their grandfathers' complicity in the horrific crimes that occurred. Hashimoto writes, "Welzer and his colleagues posited that grandchildren were more susceptible to 'heroize' the wartime generation" (38). While I would argue that such testimonies would assuage the guilt of descendants of perpetrators of violence, but would do little to alleviate sufferings of victims and their descendants, I cannot gloss over the complexity and paradox of humans. Those who are victims in one story could be political actors with agency in another, and they could be portrayed as perpetrators in another. In the tumult and context of conflict zones, including Jammu and Kashmir, ethnic and religious groups as well as individuals tend to interpret history through the subjective lens of contemporary politics, as I discussed in my book *The Life of a Kashmiri Woman*. Individuals who are memorialized at once as saviors and heroes of their communities could also be vilified and held in contempt for having espoused the politics of constitutional propriety and pluralism in a nation that is becoming increasingly majoritarian. The work of such individuals could be glorified transformative and resplendent in its revision of women's roles, education, and professionalization; but they could also be blamed for not having played a more agential role during phases of armed insurgency and counterinsurgency in the history of a given nation. They might be celebrated as heroes for having prevented divisive forces of violence and brutality to rip their cultural heritage and social fabric to pieces, but they might also simultaneously have unpalatable motives attributed to them.

I cannot emphasize enough the danger of viewing the world in simplistic terms. Psychoanalyst Heidi Salm selected a case presentation through which she was "confronted anew with" her "own Nazi past," and deconstructed her own complex history. Her client Frau Ursel N. was 'locked in conflict' with her mother Frau Leder because of Ursel's inability to comprehend her mother's profession as a nurse in the Nazi era as well as her ability to applaud certain aspects of that era. Salm recounts that "in the framework of the therapy session," mother and daughter heard each other out. It was then that Frau Leder revealed that Ursel's father had been a "convinced Nazi," who had disseminated his

beliefs in school. Ursel and her daughter, Anna, were absolutely devastated to hear that, and Ursel felt depleted. In the course of time, Ursel could start picking up the pieces and understand that the part of her father that swore allegiance to “the Party” and inculcated Nazi ideology in school-going children could not be severed from the part that was affable, magnanimous, thoughtful, and compassionate. It was in the course of the subsequent therapy sessions that Ursel’s mother, Frau Leder, could find solace in transmuting the fear generated by oppressive mechanisms of the Nazi regime into active physical caretaking for others in her work as a nurse (54–55).

Salm also recounts the telling situation of Friedrich K. who was one of the participants in a “nine day therapy seminar,” which was “within the framework of a family therapy training course.” In his endeavor to construct the narrative of his father’s biography, Friedrich was unable to piece a couple of things together. He discovered, to his utter bewilderment and chagrin, that his father had been an “active member” of the Schutzstaffel, which was a paramilitary organization under the Nazi Party. He was flabbergasted to have discovered this well-kept secret, particularly since Friedrich himself was vehemently opposed to the monolithic, oppressive, and anti-semitic views of Nazism. “For him, his equilibrium was shattered by this new information” (56). After the unsavory revelations of his father’s past, Salm reports, Friedrich was skeptical about everything he thought his father represented. She and the rest of the participants in the seminar employed the devices of “family reconstruction, role plays, and sculpturing” (57). It was then that Salm understood that Friedrich’s accusations against his father, Ulrich, would remain invalid until they could hear the other side of the story as well. Often, the gulf between generations and the silence of older people about unpalatable truths, the young gloss over the anxieties and precariousness that they might have endured. The reticence of the older generation could potentially lead to the self-righteousness of the young, who don’t know enough to recognize the complexity of the past. She places herself in Ulrich’s shoes and recalls that as a leader or “Führerin” in the League of German Girls, she was swept away by the need to identify with a group, which gave her a strong sense of identity. Salm vividly remembers that although, as a young adult, she avowedly owed allegiance to the Nazi Party, the *Sturmabteilung*, which was the Party’s original paramilitary wing, she wasn’t immune to the fear it generated in marginalized groups or those who had been dehumanized by them. But the children

of those who at one point in time were affiliated with Adolph Hitler had constructed a monolithic narrative of history, which had neat categories. I would argue that the silence of their parents and other members of the older generation, which Salm attributes to having been taught “to live with the silence of our parents, our teachers, and our superiors,” made the young incapable of recognizing the complexity of their parents’ identities (60).

Cultural trauma if inherited from one’s forbears infuses family relationships. It also has a significant impact on identity formation. The anguish caused by trauma may be too distressful to articulate coherently, but it provides a shared frame of reference. In a similar vein, Sociologist Akiko Hashimoto explores the trauma inherited by the postwar generation in Japan. Hashimoto suggests that stories of turbulent events like war that are related to children as a “‘dreadful experience’ in family memory tend to concentrate on events occurring in the last years of the war when Japan’s losses had mounted exponentially and defeat was imminent” (25). She further suggests that the sense of despondency and helplessness generated by war irreparably damages those who experience it and impacts the tone and tenor in which they relate those stories to their progeny.

Overriding guilt about having witnessed or perpetrated the brutalities of war may increase the propensity to relegate difficult experiences to the back of the mind and take the “victim’s view of the war” (26). For example, the Serbs are still living through the resentment of having been defeated in the battle of Kosovo by the Turks in 1389. The Serbian cultural myth that underlines their collective sense of nationhood is that this battle symbolized the unfaltering bravery of the Serb nation as well as their willingness to embrace martyrdom in order to protect the sanctity of Christendom. This myth has enabled the fostering of a national ideology in Serbia and nurtured a homogenized political and cultural identity. So, it must be that the young people have learned to harbor the resentments that their parents taught them (Spencer, E-mail to author, 24 June 2020).

Often survivors attempt to assuage their guilt by constructing narratives that underscore their harrowing sufferings, or unrelenting courage, or the celebration of martyrdom to protect faith and freedom, or the purported failure of the leadership. Historically, family lore, which relates to deep inward feelings more than it does to the intellect, is imbibed by children and grandchildren without intellectualizing it. Hashimoto observes, “Personal memories passed on in the family have shaped the

sentiments of public intellectuals and artists, politicians, and bureaucrats more profoundly than is usually recognized" (26).

As Margarete Hecker notes about the armor of self-protection that enabled people to maintain a semblance of sanity in the wake of the Holocaust in Germany,

It is as if, within the families and among friends and neighbors also, an unspoken agreement existed not to talk, not open up, not to make any of the connections clear, and thus to protect each other. After all, an exacting inquiry and an honest search for answers could lead many to lose face. (75–88)

Family therapist Hecker writes about the uncertain identities and unanswered questions that children of those who had participated in the egregious acts of Nazism grew up with. She points out that those who were complicit with Nazism chose to put their memories of that era on the backburner, making it clear to their children, verbally as well as non-verbally, that they would not be able to survive the dredging up of those dreadful recollections. The onus of not overwhelming their parents with uncomfortable questions lay on the children. In one of her seminars on "family reconstruction," the goal of which was the dissolution of any complicated or gloom-ridden bond to any "single part of the family of origin" and to liberate oneself by recognizing imbroglios and complications, Hecker tells us that it was the first time several of the participants had been able to ask their parents questions out of genuine and non-cynical interest instead of in an accusatory or reproachful tone about their parents' roles in the Nazi regime."

Hoping to be freed from the guilt of being successors/heirs of those who had chosen to identify themselves with the fascist movement in Germany, the participants attended the seminar with hopeful anticipation accompanied by trepidation. It was in the course of constructing imaginary dialogues with their predecessors/patriarchs who had been loyal to the Nazi party before it took power or who had been members of the civil defense unit, which was a part of the Hitler Youth, that children learned to not place the male members of their families in simplistic categories. Instead, they recognized the multilayeredness and complexity of their relatives. Working through reductive interpretations of the lives of patriarchs and other male members of their families, participants in

Hecker's family reconstruction seminars learned to disavow political affiliations and offenses that they deemed destructive and for which they held their predecessors accountable, while not depreciating their qualities. After Wolfgang, one of the participants, confronted his grandfather, a "convinced Nazi," in an imaginary dialogue, he felt liberated enough to no longer have "to take part in the repressive process of collective silence" (76-81). "Perpetrator trauma," as LaCapra points out, cannot be left unacknowledged "if perpetrators are to distance themselves from an earlier implication in deadly ideologies and practices" (LaCapra, *Writing History* 79).

In a seminar entitled "Family Work with Foreigners," a student, Uta, who was being trained in the area of social rehabilitation revealed a gory aspect of the family history, which involved a parricide about which the family had maintained a stony silence. "Through her own silence," Uta had "helped to strengthen the process of repression." Her family hailed from Westerwald, Germany and nursed a pathological hatred for "foreigners." As a social worker, she works in a "project dealing with unemployed youth." Although she doesn't confront the xenophobic members of her family, because she feels obligated to defer to her parents and to not increase their "burden" by burning bridges with her kith and kin, she responds more firmly to the derogatory comments that the young people she works with make about foreigners. She "involves the young people in discussions" about these denigrating remarks. Although Uta identified with the victims of the Nazi regime and wanted to do her part by contributing to the process of pacification and "reconciliation," she didn't quite succeed in breaking the gloomy silence about the infusion of their family environment with an exclusionary ideology and the violent acts that enabled. Hecker notes that "by her silence," Uta "continues to participate in the mutual process of repression in her family" (*ibid.*, 81-84).

Another participant in one of Hecker's family reconstruction seminars, Gudrun, was unable to have an open relationship with her parents. Her paternal grandmother had been one of the enforcers of the laws implemented from 1933 on that were designed and executed to eliminate individuals that suffered from various physical, psychological, and psychic ailments. The draconian laws were meant to protect the purported purity of the Aryan stock by weeding out aberrations through forced sterilization or euthanasia. But Gudrun's family was silent on contentious issues that, potentially, could have caused even greater rifts in their household.

“A speechlessness” permeated “all areas of this family’s life” (*ibid.*, 85–87). Hecker point out that subsequent to the collapse of the Third Reich in 1945, it seemed as though “within the families and among friends and neighbors also, an unspoken agreement existed not to talk, not to open up, not to make any of the connections clear, and thus to protect each other” (88).

Post-1945, the people of Germany were confronted by a world that had been reduced to rubble. The flotsam and jetsam of the old world had to be carefully picked up in order to rebuild it and form it afresh. The process of rebuilding required recreating oneself and fashioning a new persona. Denial and repression of “the mental and emotional world of National Socialism was so complete and thorough,” Hecker observed, that memories of that horrific and frightful time were difficult to dredge up, but once memories of the abominable and incommunicable experiences of the time surfaced, they were too agonizing to bear. “It is as if, within families and among friends and neighbors also, an unspoken agreement existed not to talk, not open up, not to make any of the connections clear, and thus to protect each other. After all, an exacting inquiry and an honest search for answers could lead many to lose face.” The children, thus, took “took pains to protect their parents from such sudden explosions of old memories. They avoided asking their parents questions about harrowing experiences that they might have participated in. “By not posing any questions,” they supported “the process of repression” (75–89). The weight of maintaining silence and kinship loyalties in the face of distressing truths can be heavy. The refuge that the children sought in silence protects the parents from having to undertake a self-reflective exercise that would be bristling with distress.

The difficulty of garnering the inner resources necessary to cope with the magnitude of their culpability, ignominy, and disrepute would be overwhelming, unless they found a new vantage point that would enable “a transformation and a distancing so that the memories don’t simply freeze into stereotypical images” (*ibid.*). The children were caught in a dilemma, because while they might not identify with their parents’ political ideologies, they were hard-pressed to deny the vicissitudes that they bravely dealt with and the fortitude with which they protected their children in strenuous times. Therefore, “in order to survive emotionally there exists, alongside all the opposition to these parents, a great need to love them.” After the end of World War II, a feeling of depletion and exhaustion was pervasive. People lacked the “spiritual strength” to work through

feelings of “rage, anger, sadness, anxiety, or shame.” The prioritizing of survival caused, I would argue, an anomie, which is a phenomenon that I address in greater detail later in the book.

Hecker reminds us about the enormous fortitude and strength it took “for the individual course participants to confront their parents’ repressed emotions,” and to work through their parents’ misjudgments, miscalculations, dereliction, “and active participation in the Nazi regime,” while simultaneously “accepting themselves as members of this particular family” (90–91). In the course of family reconstruction seminars/workshops, Hecker observed greater understanding of the trepidations, allurements, and human fragilities that people were confronted by in the Nazi era. It was also just as clear that “in every single situation” the political/historical “actors had the chance to decide for or against our common humanity” (92). History, as I’ve said countless times, is not seamless, nor can people be placed in neatly divided categories.

In the podcast with sociologist Metta Spencer, Dr. Charles David Tauber, CEO and founder of “Coalition for Work with Psychotrauma and Peace,” referenced political psychiatrist Vamik Volkan’s concept of “chosen trauma.” Volkan, Tauber observes, employed this concept to describe the way racial and ethnic groups, nations, and even individuals, interpret history through the lens of a particular trauma or traumatic event to the exclusion of atrocities committed by themselves. Volkan posits,

During my decades-long work in international relations I wrote about the influence that shared images of specific historical events during ancestors’ times—I called them “chosen traumas” or “chosen glories”—have on societies. Such shared images become most significant “identity markers” for ethnic, national, religious, or political ideological large groups—tens, thousands, or millions of people who share the same language, sentiments, nursery rhythms, language, food, dances, and other things. When a present-day conflict begins with current enemies, “chosen glories” and “chosen traumas” are reactivated along with entitlement ideologies. Entitlement ideologies refer to a shared sense of entitlement to recover what was lost in reality and fantasy during the collective trauma that evolved as a chosen trauma. Or they refer to the mythologized birth of a large group, a process which later generations idealize. They deny difficulties and losses that occurred during the event, and imagine their large group as if it were composed of persons belonging to a superior species. Holding on to an entitlement ideology primarily reflects a complication in large-group

mourning, an attempt both to deny losses as well as a wish to recover them, a narcissistic reorganization accompanied by “bad” prejudice for the Other. The reactivation of “chosen glories” and “chosen traumas”, along with entitlement ideologies within a society, creates a “time collapse”: feelings, perceptions, fears, prejudices, and wishes connected with such “identity markers” become intertwined with feelings and thoughts about the current enemy. This magnifies dangers, confuses reality, and leads to “magical thinking”, thus complicating attempts toward peaceful solutions. (13)

Salm mustered the courage to question her complicity in teaching and learning a skewed history, which she later recognized as an exercise fraught with peril.

Before I delve further into the damage wrought by obstructing the critical thinking skills of students and inhibiting their creative power, I take the liberty of interspersing the intriguing testimony of psychoanalyst Heidi Salm, who, by her own admission, was for a few years a leader of ten-to-twelve-year -old girls in the League of German girls, which was the female counterpart of the Nazi youth movement. She tells us that she was promoted to the position of council leader in due course, prior to being drafted “into the Workers’ Corps in 1939” after she graduated from high school. Salm recalls that in school she learned a lop-sided version of history, in which Germans were depicted as the elect. As a leader of the youngest members of the League of German girls, she passed on that myopic view of history to those who were in her charge. Years later, her reflection on her prosopography and her role as malefactor sent shivers down her spine. She admits, without mincing words, that she “was shocked at how blindly and uncritically” she “passed on to the younger girls this Hitlerian worldview, which held up the Germans as the ‘chosen people’ and race, and took every sign of difference as grounds for expulsion...” (50–53).

Similarly, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in India, subsequent to its victories in state and national elections and its rise to the echelons of power in 2014 and 2019, availed itself of the myriad opportunities to mold malleable minds and indoctrinate the young. They have since notched up efforts that began 2000 in order to evoke community is evoked to create nostalgia for a concocted past that is meticulously

contrived. The BJP embarked on a truculent campaign to imbue education with the exclusionary ideology of Hindutva, which I explore in the next chapter.



In the Arena of Textbook Wars, Education Can Be Deployed to Build Common Ground Between Opposing Forces

As I observed in *The Fiction of Nationality in an Era of Transnationalism*, the BJP's project of "constructing the history" of India "involves selective appropriation of past and present histories and an abrogation of major part of those histories. ... In this nationalist project, one of the forms that the nullification of past and present histories takes is the subjection of religious minorities to a centralized and authoritarian state buttressed by nostalgia of a 'glorious past'" (Khan 3).

In 2000, the National Council of Education Research and Training (NCERT), which is the central Indian government organization that finalizes the national curriculum and supervises education for high school students, devised "a new curricular framework called the National Curriculum Framework of School Education (NCFSE)," which comprised a document that drew out "the curriculum and a series of textbooks." The document described by the NCERT accentuated the import of "religious values in education" and asserted that "students would be evaluated, ranked, and tracked by their 'spiritual quotient,' or 'S.Q.,' as well as by their I.Q." (Nussbaum 266). Subsequently, the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) insisted on the deletion of passages it considered offensive and egregious from old textbooks. The portions that were considered objectionable were those that emphasized the preponderance of archaeological survey over "religious text as evidence for the dating of material artifacts." Other passages that were

considered “objectionable” were those that provided substantive historical evidence of opposition to the hegemony of Brahminism; the deeply entrenched and discriminatory caste system in India; and surgent religious movements that advocated egalitarianism in the face of casteism (for more information on deleted portion from history textbooks, see Birla 35–36; Khan and Sachdeva 51–53). New textbooks, from which “objectionable” passages had been redacted, were published in 2002 and 2003.

One of the fabrications in the new textbook for Social Sciences and History, which was published in 2002, was the erasing of the “Indus Valley” Civilization and its replacement by the mythical “Indus-Saraswati” Civilization. The erasure of the Indus Valley Civilization and the conjuring of the “Indus-Saraswati” Civilization in its stead was a strategic maneuver to negate the fact that the ancient scriptures of Hinduism are associated with the advent of the Aryan peoples from the Northwest, and that Hinduism is a syncretic religious tradition that has evolved through a commingling of various cultures and traditions (Friese 15). An entitlement ideology manifested itself in the attempt of those who rewrote the textbook for Social Sciences and History in 2002 “to imagine their large group as if it were composed of persons belonging to a superior species” (Volkan 13). It is regrettable that in harboring “chosen glories” and “chosen traumas,” the complex political history of the Indian subcontinent is being deliberately ignored by the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). For those of us who “remain deeply committed to democracy ... the fate of Indian democracy is one of the most critical questions of our time” (Alexander).

Nussbaum’s thorough examination of the NCERT’s newly published textbooks of Social Sciences and History drew her attention to the appalling distortions of scholarly works. She notes that such distortions promoted the “ideology of ‘India shining’,” promoting “a glorious average,” making it unnecessary to consider the plight of those who “enjoyed an especially low quality of life, such as women and the rural poor” (269). Celebratory and effusive accounts of ancient Indian civilization were promulgated through the new textbooks, diverting attention from “issues of caste and class oppression, the misery of the poor, and very conspicuously, the situation of women.” Nothing was said of the regressive customs and traditions, some of which enjoyed religious sanction, that legitimized the objectification and dehumanization of women (*ibid.*). Nussbaum underlines a particularly outrageous example of political distortion in the social science textbook for class X. The textbook states that any

activity considered seditious, the aim of which is “to overthrow an elected government” would be called “terrorist” (*Contemporary India* 153). In effect, the curtailment of civil liberties in Kashmir and persecution of minorities in other parts of India, and atrocities inflicted on them by vigilantes would enjoy impunity. “The text,” Nussbaum points out, “gives the superficial appearance of condemning all religious violence, while shading things so as to exempt the violence perpetrated by the right” (270).

A more recent instance of stymying the growth of critical intelligence, curtailing the ability of students to critically engage with a multiplicity of opinions and points of view, and the entrenching of monolithic discourses is the Central Board of Secondary Education’s (CBSE) erasure of sections on “Citizenship, Nationalism, Secularism, Understanding Partition, and Democratic Rights across multiple subjects” (CBSE is the national-level board of education for private and public schools in India). The chapter on “Democratic Rights” in the Social Sciences syllabus for the ninth grade has been excised. “Chapters on Democracy and Diversity, Gender, Religion and Caste, Popular Struggles and Movements, as well as Forest and Wildlife” from the Social Science syllabus for Grade X have been expunged. Topics of significant import in a democratic nation, like “federalism, local government,” which were delineated in “a section” entitled “Indian Constitution at Work” in the Political Science syllabus for eleventh grade have been arbitrarily removed (“Secularism, Caste Under Axed Topics as CBSE Reduces Syllabus”).

With the atrocious deletion of the concepts of “citizenship, nationalism, and secularism” from CBSE’s curriculum, India’s commitment to the principles of secularism and democracy, which had guided the people of India in their struggle for emancipation, has been given short shrift. I would argue that such appalling excisions from textbooks negate principles that are guaranteed by the Constitution of India, embodied in the fundamental covenants, and enforceable by courts of law. The legitimization by the CBSE of an exclusivist narrative through textbooks and syllabi certainly doesn’t bode well for the burgeoning of parliamentary democracy in India. “With textbooks re-written to suit right-wing ideological re-scripting of history in large democracies like India and the United States, what remains at threat is not only the deep and critical regard for the truth and one’s past, but the promise of democracy for its most beleaguered communities that constitute the margins of the nation, the minorities, the othered, and the disenfranchised” (Subramanian, E-mail to author).

The historical, political science, and sociological narratives being taught to students in the aftermath of these changes deprive them of the richness of complex and multidimensional narratives of nationhood, citizenship, democracy, federalism, and secularism. As I've argued before, the dissemination of unbalanced narratives through academic textbooks and syllabi leads to the politicization of identity in the form of fundamentalism, xenophobia, and an uncritical espousal of tradition. I assert that tampering with education is just one more integrative measure of the BJP-led federal government that aids its project of rendering null and void narratives that threaten its project of creating homogenized cultural and religious identities.

Such grave lapses are responsible for breeding extremist national chauvinism, thereby weakening the secular character of the Constitution and the country. I am not saying this as a Kashmiri Muslim, but as a South Asian and, more so, because I have never reconciled with the communalization of politics. Muslims are part and parcel of South Asia's history—past and future—and I am of the firm conviction that every inhabitant of India must be given a sense of participation in the country's affairs. In light of the complex political history of India, it becomes all the more important to ensure that reality is not confused by otherizing minorities of India. Real democracies, as I've said in my previous works, thrive on differences of opinions, not on gagging those who might not be on the same page ("The BJP is Not India, and Every Indian is Not a Modi-Devotee"). But what we are witnessing in India with unjustified curtailments in academic curricula and falsification of history in textbooks is a systematic attempt at deterring the growth of democracy by depoliticizing citizens.

In the battle to indoctrinate moldable young minds, the BJP sought to entrench its hegemony through national textbooks issued by the National Council for Educational Research (NCERT), particularly in "history and social science" (Nussbaum 265). Author of *Prejudice and Pride*, Krishna Kumar, decries the tendentiousness of the NCERT series, which curtails the imaginative faculty and creative power "leaving little room for children to participate in historical analysis and judgment" (54). I still shudder to think of the "Medieval History" course, which I was required to take as an elective in my first year as a Student of English Honors at Lady Shri Ram College (LSR), New Delhi. The textbook for that course was pedagogically dull, unengaging, and devoid of intellectual depth. In an elective course, classroom pedagogy whittled down to teaching to the

test, and students were encouraged to use study guides for the exam, which sanctioned students' lack of engagement with the material and peripheralized analysis. The sophomoric language, shoddy grammatical errors, as well as typos in the textbook and study guides left much to be desired. Academic institutions (I would credit the English Honors course at LSR for having broadened my imaginative skills and honed my creative powers) at which students are trained to become either technocrats or upholders of a monolithic ideology, that doesn't brook diverse interpretations and analyses, choke the space for a progressive pedagogy that would enhance students' reasoning abilities.

I have reiterated on various platforms that in order to create democracy, there must be a minimum of participation, education, and adequate diversity in a society. One, as Nussbaum also observed, would be hard-pressed to deny that participatory democracy cannot be established without education:

Through primary and secondary education, young citizens form, at a young age, habits of mind that will be with them all through their lives. They learn to ask questions or not to ask them; to take what they hear at face value or to probe more deeply; to imagine the situation of a person different from themselves or to see such a person as a looming threat to their own projects; to think of themselves as members of a homogeneous group or as citizens of a nation, and a world, made up of many different people and groups, all of whom deserve respect and understanding. (264)

One of the egregious blunders of the BJP was "its failure to" to emphasize skills that are required to sustain pluralism, shore up democracy, and build common ground to enable negotiations between opposing forces. Dialogue across political, ethnic, cultural, and religious divides can be forged "only if young citizens know how to engage in dialogue and deliberation in the first place" (Nussbaum 291).

The New National Education Policy (NEP) document launched by India's BJP-led federal government on July 29, 2020 suffers from a parochial understanding of holistic education. It also suffers from a dismal lack of transitional structures that would enable students to enrich their imaginative understanding and cultivate skills necessary to facilitate meaningful global collaborations. In a telephonic conversation with me, Political Psychologist Ashis Nandy notes that the New Educational Policy document is not "well thought-out." With its proposal to set

up “a dedicated unit to coordinate digital infrastructure, content and capacity building within the education ministry to look after the online learning needs of both school and higher education will pave the way for digital transformation of higher education” (“New Education Policy to Help in Digital Policy Transformation”). Professor Nandy was critical of the increased dependence on digitalized knowledge that the policy encourages. He points out that a large chunk of the population of India may be mobile users, but they do not own good quality smartphones, making the policy to transfer, transmit, and store knowledge through digitalized forms highly questionable. He added that the NEP document is “not realistic and is oriented to the electoral impact it is likely to make.” He underscored that several Indians do not access wireless broadband through smartphones and would not, therefore, be able to access digitalized knowledge (August 6, 2020).

Political Scientist Ajay Gudavarthy echoes Nandy’s assessment of NEP document. In his correspondence with me, he observed that “the NEP has come at a crucial juncture in Indian politics where a variant of authoritarian and majoritarian politics wish to ambush democracy and change the terms of reference of politics.” Contrary to the understanding of politics legitimized by the current regime in India, politics was a means “to achieve greater representation, participation, equality and dignity.” He further elucidated,

NEP is purported to play a key role of acting as a hinge for cultural majoritarianism to be realized in the context of modern democratic sensibilities, within the limits of secular-Constitutionalism and procedural justice. NEP is an attempt to circumvent them, without looking to disrupt, in realizing an exclusionary project of Hindutva majoritarianism by reiterating neoliberal proclivities. Here, various provisions seek to vocationalize education for majority of vulnerable social groups such as the Muslims, Dalits, Other Backward Classes [a term employed by the Government of India to categorize socially and educationally marginalized classes] and women by offering them the option of opting out from regular degree courses and taking diplomas instead. While this ostensibly looks like expansion of choice, it effectively reinforces existing social and economic hierarchies. It’s a choice to drop out of aspiring greater social mobility. Hierarchical social differentiation is further reinforced by privatizing higher education making it expensive and culturally alien to many, even as it emphasizes local culture and ancient knowledge. It is important to read the provisions between the

lines of optics and their effective outcomes. (E-mail to author, 29 August 2020)

I would assert that in keeping with the BJP's policy of harboring "chosen glories" and "chosen traumas," the NEP charts the path for the glorification of fossilized cultural, political, and linguistic institutions, which would render young citizens incapable of forging informed dialogue and questioning unfounded biases of the past. Professor Nandy validated my skepticism about this policy document by observing that in a polity that insists on homogeneity, solidarity, conforming to the "correct" ideology, substantive criticism was silenced. He did not perceive space and opportunities for the growth of critical thinking and analytical skills in such an environment (*ibid.*). Also, the emphasis on Mathematics and Computational thinking downplays the need to cultivate a narrative imagination, pluralistic understandings of sociocultural and political issues, and engaging with opposing worldviews respectfully and empathetically in order to posit viable solutions to calamitous global issues (see also Thakur and Gudavarthy, "What NEP Could Have Learnt from Delhi University and JNU").

I would argue that during the riots in Delhi in February 2020 stories of sanity, human compassion, and mutual trust that have shone in the wake of targeted violence against Muslims in Delhi. Despite the criminal apathy of law enforcement agencies in Delhi and incendiary speeches of head honchos of the ruling BJP, majority of common citizens in the national capital kept themselves away from the despicable influence of communal politics. Amid incidents of shootings, beatings, arsons, and lootings in Delhi in February–March 2020, several unsung heroes fought to protect our common humanity. From the Hindu man who sacrificed his life saving his six Muslim neighbors from the conflagration that engulfed them, to the Muslims who formed a human chain around a temple to prevent its desecration, such heart-warming instances demonstrate that humanity hasn't perished ("Delhi Riots: Hindu Man Saved Six Muslim Neighbors from Torched House, Struggles With Severe Burns"; "Muslims Form Human Chain to Save Temple in Delhi"). Stories of Muslims saving Hindus and protecting their religious sites; Hindus warding off frenzied mobs, and giving refuge to endangered Muslims; and Sikhs opening relief camps for the sick, wounded, and vulnerable are manifestations of the indivisibility of the human bond ("Delhi Riots: Muslim Neighbors Brave Mob Wrath to Save Hindus in Minority"; Trivedi; Abraham). I would

contend that such individuals discovered meaning in life by the “attitude” they took toward “unavoidable suffering” (Frankl, *Man’s Search for Meaning* 200). People who recognize the inherent human dignity of one another and are not swept away by the communal mob frenzy are the real heroes. They ensure that the State and its appendages cannot claim monopoly of every human relationship.

I consider it necessary to provide some context here. In 2019, the federal government of India deliberately fostered religious and cultural differences in its efforts to create homogeneous subjects of state. The politics practiced by those who seek to homogenize India, which necessitates a rejection of pluralism and a rich cultural heritage, were challenged by common citizens, which underlined “the fact that being human always points, and is directed, to something, or someone, other than oneself” (ibid., 200). The diversity of India is in danger of being neutralized within a nationalist polity that destroys the nuances woven by religious, cultural, and linguistic differences.

I reiterate that in a diverse country, it is not only for the majority community to approve laws, but the minority community should also feel that constitutional amendments and laws will bring peace, security, and honor to them as well (“Homogenizing India: The Citizenship Debate”). “If one refuses to reconcile with the multiplicity, plurality, and polyphony of our complicated intra-woven identities,” editor of *Home and the World: South Asia in Transition* Shreerekha Subramanian reminded me, “in favor of the tyrants of the present who become the arbiters of facts via rewritten textbooks that leave no room for healthy debate and introspective reflections, then we jeopardize not simply the truth, morality, and ethics, but the ‘demos’ that the ‘democracies’ putatively protect.” I observed in a couple of my articles on the increasing homogenization of India that the Citizenship Amendment Act seeks to give citizenship to only non-Muslim religious minorities from Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan, who are supposedly fleeing persecution. It does not accord the same privilege to Muslim minorities, who might be fleeing religious persecution as well (“Homogenizing India;” India is Gradually Leaning Toward a Dangerous Unitarianism”). In effect, the Citizenship Amendment Bill flouts the principle of secularism and rights relating to life, liberty, and freedom of expression guaranteed by the Constitution for non-Muslims and Muslims alike.

In the aftermath of Independence and Partition in 1947, administrative decrees exacerbated the religious divide. For instance, in September

1947, the government of India established the Military Evacuation Organization to get Hindus and Sikhs out of Pakistan in an organized and efficient fashion. This severance politicized not just religious identities but linguistic identities as well. As Chandra Chatterjee notes in *Surviving Colonialism* (2002), “Democracy in India is itself protest-ridden. Ethnic and religious minorities protest against the singular definition of ‘nation.’ The politically marginalized groups protest against inadequate representation in government policies” (7–8).

The Rights and Risks Analysis Group states in its press release on the adverse impact of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam, northeast India,

There is no escape from the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam and every resident of Assam must mandatorily participate if they seek to be identified as citizens of India. The State Coordinator of the NRC, Assam under the supervision of the Supreme Court of India has been preparing the controversial NRC with the aim to identify foreigners i.e. those who had allegedly migrated to the State after 24th March 1971 as part of the implementation of the 2005 tripartite agreement signed by the Government of India, Assam Government and the All Assam Students Union (AASU) to implement the Assam Accord of 1985. (Chakma)

The National Register of Citizens exercise in Assam, which is in Northeast India, has ended up excluding 1.9 million people, mostly genuine citizens of all religious affiliations. A study conducted by Citizens for Justice and Peace (CJP), a human rights group, a few months ago divulged heavy economic and human cost borne by the state’s residents. They claimed that in Assam several people had lost their lives in the pandemonium that followed in the wake of citizenship-related issues. Those deaths were attributed to apprehensions, vexation, bitterness, ineffectiveness, and fear of being incarcerated in detention camps. Citizens for Justice and Peace states,

first accessed a list of the all those who have died in Assam’s dreaded detention camps. In this list published as far back as July 2019, we discovered that Goalpara detention camp has proved to be the deadliest and leads the list with ten dead inmates. The Tezpur facility follows closely with nine dead inmates. Meanwhile, three people died in at the Silchar detention camp in Cachar district, two people including one woman died in the Kokrajhar detention camp, and one person died in the Jorhat detention

camp. The dead include 14 Muslims, 10 Hindus and one member of the Tea Tribes. (Kadam)

In effect, the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) flouts the principle of secularism and rights relating to life, liberty, and freedom of expression guaranteed by the Constitution for non-Muslims and Muslims alike.

Although the Supreme Court of India now says that the CAA “does not impinge upon any existing rights of a citizen,” several legal experts including retired judges of the country’s apex court as well as a former judge of the highest court in the land have said in media interviews that the provision in the amended Citizenship Act regarding illegal immigrants is highly problematic and violates Article 14 of the Constitution of India (“CAA ‘Legal, Can’t Be Questioned Before Court’: Center to Supreme Court”; Sinha; Chaudhuri and Sinha). From this perspective, Citizenship Amendment Act-National Population Register-National Register of Citizens is Prime Minister Modi’s government’s weapon to disenfranchise minorities, especially Muslims, and strip them of their basic rights as citizens of India (Shankar).

It’s worrying to see how the peaceful protests by peoples of all communities’ against the discriminatory legislation, CAA, have met hostility and brutality. While in BJP ruled Uttar Pradesh, police used extreme force to crush peaceful protesters, the law enforcement in Delhi, in particular, looked the other way while atrocities were unleashed on peaceful anti-CAA protestors protecting their fundamental rights (Sachdeva). Vitriolic speeches of henchmen of the BJP were designed to instigate their supporters to take the law into their hands, and they were given carte blanche (Jha; Chaudhuri and Sinha).

Despite the criminal apathy of law enforcement agencies in Delhi and incendiary speeches of head honchos of the BJP, majority of common citizens in the national capital have kept themselves away from the despicable influence of communal politics. Those who have been in the political arena for a long time must recognize that there is no politics without negotiation. And the ultimate negotiating authority is always the citizens.

As I’ve said before, the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) of India as well as the National Register of Citizens (NRC) have been legitimized by reversion to religious values. As the people of India seek to improve their lives, they find that oppositional nationalist and proto-nationalist forces can prove as dark a threat to their identities as that which colonialism presented. In Prime Minister Modi’s India, the uncritical reversion to

fundamentalism and the superficial creation of a “unified” political identity has led to an erosion of unique and distinctive cultural identities. Internal hierarchies entrenched by ultra-right-wing nationalism relegate religious and ethnic minorities to the background.

For instance, the imperialism of Hindi in the India of 2019 has relegated Urdu to the background. The year the BJP came back to power with a brute majority, Muslim culture was metaphorically dislocated. Historically, the Partition of 1947 fragmented the writing community by redistributing its members into two separate territorial nations. One of the significant consequences of the Partition was the migration of Urdu writers of Muslim origin to Pakistan. So the chime of Independence was, as Aijaz Ahmad eloquently puts it, “experienced in the whole range of Urdu literature of the period not in the celebratory mode but as a defeat, a disorientation, a diaspora” (*Lineages* 118; also see Jayal). Ethnic and religious minorities in present-day India continue to protest against the singular definition of nation. It is amusing, as I observed in a couple of my public talks and articles, that all this is being done in the name of so-called national unity and emotional integration (“Revitalization of Federalism and Restoration of Civil Rights in Kashmir;” “Nation-Building and Conflict-Resolution;” “Peace and Resolution of Conflict”).

I reiterate that it is my belief that in a federal set-up, the best way for emotional integration and national unity is not the over-centralization of powers but its decentralization leading to the restoration of power in the hands of the federating units. In light of the present over-centralization of powers, India is gradually tending to be a unitary rather than a federal state, and I do not consider this trend as a good omen for the solidarity and integrity of the nation (see Khan, “Homogenizing India: the Citizenship Debate.” Also see Khan, “India is Gradually Leaning Toward a Dangerous Unitarianism”).

I recognize in my previous and current work that although the Constitution of India seeks to guarantee respect for the rule of law, independence of the judiciary, the integrity of the electoral process, provisions of the Constitution of India have been breached not just in Jammu and Kashmir but in mainland India as well. The ideals that it enshrines have been forgotten. Rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution, embodied in the fundamental covenants and enforceable by courts of law, have been flouted. Ultra-right-wing nationalist organizations in mainland India have wanted “subservience of mind and uniformity of ideology, an

orthodox picture of history, a single view of national identity parroted by all" (Nussbaum 331).

"The problem of narrating contentious national history is not unique" to any one country as Hashimoto observes (88). In countries like the United States, India, Japan, Turkey, France, and Greece, national interest, as defined by the ruling regime, supersedes the autonomy and freedom of education. Mainstream accounts of a nation's past impact the structure of the national legacy for posterity. Education loses its independence when it is reduced to being a vehicle to homogenize the identity of a nation and, thereby, legitimize majoritarian rule. History books in several parts of the world, as I noted earlier, reflect the gestalt of the age in which they are produced. History and Social Studies textbooks have been employed as tools to render citizens more pliable to the interventions of the establishment. Building on the work of John W. Dower, Kaori Okana and Motonori Tsuchiya, and Shoko Yoneyama, Hashimoto observe that the US occupation of Japan post-World War II "banned history, geography, and moral education from Japanese schools, recognizing them as the prewar instruments of mobilizing nationalist prowar sentiments." Rendering the "ideological struggle over citizenship education" as a fiercely "contested site," "the old ideological canon of loyalty to the imperial state was supplanted by the new ideals of human rights in the democratic state, framed as the 'correct' ideas for new citizenship in the new society" (89). Those who propound the regulation of "national history to cultivate 'desirable' national identity and solidarity" legitimate "positive framing of the past by separating the pedagogical and the academic aspects of history" (*ibid.*).

I would underline that such narratives of "national belonging" peripheralize those who have been winnowed away by unitary historical discourses. I posit that it is in such situations of maleficent homogeneity and demonization of people from other backgrounds that educators must emphasize the responsibility of individuals to decipher the meaning of their lives as well as the responsibility to actualize that "potential meaning."



Empowering Pedagogy: Dialogue and Building Common Ground

In his reflections on victims of political terror and genocide, Richard Mollica, Director of the Harvard Program in Refugee Trauma of Massachusetts General Hospital and Harvard Medical School, observes that the door can be opened for healing through the reconstruction of networks of relationships and identities. Political psychologist Vamik Volkan to whom the reader has already been introduced further reminds us of the complicated and complex nature of mourning in a war-torn or conflict zone: “Another major factor that complicates a mourning process comes from its contamination with reactions to a trauma.” A loss that renders a person powerless and ineffectual is accompanied by disparaging feelings of shame and humiliation. “The mourning process,” in such situations “is accompanied by other psychological tasks, such as turning helplessness and passivity into assertion and activity and reversing shame and humiliation.” An unforeseen and unanticipated loss is traumatic in and of itself, but “the combination of a loss with actual trauma complicates the mourning process in a serious way.” Losses that occur during conflicts and war-like situations are exacerbated by degradation, ignominy, indignity, and terror propagated either by state or non-state actors, or both. In such scenarios, the mourning process is rendered even more complicated and entangled (*Enemies*).

In such gnarled and complicated situations, everyone needs to be open to diplomacy and peaceful negotiations to further growth. How

can dialogue be facilitated between groups that are hostile to one another while enriching the psychic world of the participants as well as their emergence as confident and empowered individuals? The aims of that process should be repair of the frayed ethnic, racial, and religious fabric in all parts of civil society. An indispensable ingredient of repairing the tattered ethic, sociopolitical, and religious ethnic fabric of the region is the revelation and preservation of truth. Acknowledging the torment suffered by the wounded, mauled, tortured, lacerated, and the dead is a crucial step on the road to healing. Often, filial loyalty might make it difficult to hold one's near and dear ones accountable for the role they might have played in exacerbating conflict and accompanying suffering.

In their work on Cambodian Americans and other refugees from traumatic backgrounds in the United States, Nancy J. Lin and Karen L. Suyemoto emphasize,

... equally important is the need for victims of trauma to develop ways to cope with their traumatic experiences and protect themselves from re-experiencing the injuries of the past that are often far too close to the surface for comfort. (129)

Employing silence to avoid confronting the affliction, agony, and despair caused by political turbulence and sociocultural upheaval could, potentially, lead to a diminution of familial and communitarian identities. It could also create an abyss that erodes the cultural identity and sense of nationhood of the younger generation. In a similar vein, Hashimoto writes about the reticence of Japanese or American veterans of World War II whose reluctance to elucidate their war experiences served "to discourage questions about something too painful to recount" (30). Can the profundity of memories and mourning be relegated to the background in official accounts of history?

The significance of the collective recognition of the macabre and gruesome wrongs done to people, particularly in conflict zones, by the establishment as well as non-state actors has been emphasized by the redoubtable Nobel Peace Laurette, Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu:

However painful the experience the wounds of the past must not be allowed to fester. They must be opened. They must be cleansed. And balm must be poured on them, so they can heal. This is not to be obsessed with

the past. It is to take care that the past is properly dealt with for the sake of the future.

Peace activists can do a lot by highlighting human rights violations that occur in conflict zones—human rights violations for which the government as well as militant organizations/militias are responsible. The process of integration into the larger community and building bridges can be facilitated by educators.

In order to further my goal of engaging in reflective action as an educator working with diverse cultural and social groups, I attempted to enrich my thinking process as well as the conversation by bringing eminent academics/scholars, and activists into it. While pondering these questions, I engaged in dialogue with Nourah Abdullah M. Alhawasi, Associate Professor in Islamic Studies at Princess Nourah Bint Abdul Rahman University in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Professor Alhawasi has a keen interest in interreligious dialogue. She observes that in families older generations tend to communicate their experiences and opinions to the younger generation, particularly in some cultures. She points out that the relaying of family lore/stories/traumatic histories could be perceived by younger generations as harsh judgment by their predecessors or attempts to dominate them. Professor Alhawasi believes that in order for education to be an effective tool, it is necessary for multiple generations in a family to cultivate dialogue skills and open-mindedness, because traumatized and vulnerable people can easily feel misunderstood (E-mail to author, 9 July 2020).

In response to my question on whether educational institutions that are not adequately equipped and lack well-educated and well-trained faculty exacerbate the problems of communities that they purportedly serve, Professor Alhawasi astutely observes that most problems for youth come from such institutions. She further notes that “radical and terrorist groups used the distrust between the youth and their educators, especially when it came to religion and politics, to turn the youth against their communities” (*ibid.*). On the contrary, Professor Paul Mojzes, who served as Distinguished Visiting professor of Holocaust and Genocide Studies at Richard Stockton College of New Jersey, observes in response to this question that dedicated plays a much larger and more important role than equipment. Mojzes grew up after World War II in the former Yugoslavia. In his correspondence with me, he candidly admitted that their “schools were very poor,” and they “lacked any of the gadgets available now.” Yet,

he thinks that he and his peers received a quality education. Although many of their “teachers were not particularly inspiring, it was teachers who cared and loved their pupils who helped us grow.” He called attention to the importance of teachers tailoring their teaching to the “age group they are teaching to and provide one-on-one attention” (E-mail to author, 17 July 2020). In such situations, observes founder of The Institute for Healing of Memories, Langsley, “people have to do the best with what they have,” but perhaps, “more importantly is the degree to which the teachers themselves are on their own journeys of growing, maturing and introspecting” (E-mail to author, 17 August 2020).

Are good educational institutions by themselves insufficient and counterproductive? Dr. Tabbernee, Executive Director of the Oklahoma Conference of Churches and author of *Early Christianity in Contexts: An Exploration Across Cultures and Continents* weighed in on the virtual conversation that my question had generated. I had the honor of being invited to the Oklahoma Conference of Churches 2017 Annual Dinner by the Reverend William Tabbernee. This event was held at the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City. The National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum, which, to my mind, symbolizes the dynamism of cultures and histories in the American West, was the perfect venue for this event.

I, a Kashmiri Muslim woman, had the pleasure of being seated at the Reverend’s table with Donald Karchmer, President Temple B’nai Israel and Archbishop Wise. The conversations and interactions that I had not just with those at my table but with friends in the lobby as well were a reminder that we, despite the polarizing politics in the United States and other parts of the world, retain the empathy and compassion to recognize the aspirations of distinct individuals, societies and variations in religious practices and laws from one cultural context to the other.

The entire evening, the invocation, short speeches by the interfaith award recipients, and the benediction brought home the strength of the human bond that unites us across divides created by cultural and religious fanaticism, globally. The camaraderie exhibited by the dynamic interfaith community in Oklahoma, one of the most conservative states in the United States, effectively challenged the political myopia manifested during and post-the 2016 presidential election in the country. The interfaith community of Oklahoma and the heartfelt words that I had the pleasure of listening to at the Oklahoma Conference of Churches

Annual Dinner that evening were rightly critical of the folly of homogenizing an entire religion as well as an entire region. Tabbernee said, “The sole reason the Oklahoma Conference of Churches exists is to connect, educate, and motivate people of faith to work together in promoting social justice, facilitating interfaith engagement, and providing emotional and spiritual care.” He further explained, “This is more difficult in the current prevailing ‘culture of fear,’ but by joining together we can defeat bigotry, racism, intolerance, and prejudice, and care for the poor, the disadvantaged, and those affected by natural and human-made disasters. We cannot do this alone—but we can do it together!” (Khan, “A Dynamic World Requires Inclusion and Diversity”).

In response to my question on whether good educational institutions by themselves were insufficient or counterproductive, he observed that “dealing educationally with intergenerational sociocultural trauma requires both expertise in relevant content matter and expertise in facilitating meaningful (and healing) discussion.” Misreporting, misstating, and falsifying information about “the real causes of the political/sociocultural/socioeconomic issues that provoked the trauma serves no purpose and causes damage that can be irremediable.” Also, having sessions conducted by faculty who may be well-informed and knowledgeable about the subject but who do not have the skills to facilitate “emotionally-charged discussion can be equally damaging.” Not one to simply highlight a problem without providing a solution, Tabbernee proposes “team-teaching by ‘knowledge-experts and ‘expert facilitators’ trained in ‘family-systems’ (or similarly sound psychological/sociological theories) as ‘the best approach’” (E-mail to author, 10 August 2020). I kept these rich points of view and observations in mind while thinking about the generation in Kashmir that had witnessed the vicious exacerbation of the fault lines of religion and region. They had grown up in a highly militarized zone that was further torn apart by the competing discourses of religio-nationalism, secular nationalism, and ethnic nationalism.

In the summers of 2016, 2018, and 2019, I was invited to speak at college and university campuses in Jammu and Kashmir, which is my homeland. I realized that I was addressing a generation that looked at the world through the prism of strife, battle, and low-intensity warfare. I recognized the importance of listening to them with an open mind. Although I had theorized about a writer’s and speaker’s positionality in

my previous work, I was now being called to understand the instantiation of the notion.

In her correspondence with me about the impact of intergenerational trauma, former principal of the Maulana Azad Government College for Women, Krishna Misri, observed,

Intergenerational traumatic memories and experiences make it doubly difficult for the surviving generations to face a prolonged trauma in a conflict zone. Having suffered physical and mental torture as well as death and devastation on a large scale, older generations transmit their insecurities to their children and other members of the family. Younger generations are born and brought up in tensions and insecurities and spend their entire lives grappling with their own travails. Their problems are perhaps more serious and stressful than those of previous generations. The surrealist atmosphere of living in constant fear and emotional insecurity deepen feelings of alienation and humiliation, and brutalize young minds. They revolt and want to take revenge. A treacherous cycle of violence and retaliation is set in motion. It comes at a great human and material cost (E-mail to author, 9 July 2020). I recognized that as an educator, it was necessary for me to mull over how my responsibilities as well as the resources that I had access to could enable me as well as those in similar positions as me to engage with not just the constituency in institutions of higher learning but also the constituency that that wasn't directly in my sight.

Every time I spoke at an academic institution in Kashmir, I was highly conscious of the attempt of some members of the audience to place me within a familial framework, and to judge my worth based on their empathy or lack thereof with the political side of my family. It didn't take much to tell that some of the students and faculty members at the institutions I spoke at had already pigeonholed me before hearing about my research and pedagogical methodologies. I was intrigued by the uncritical ease with which some of them looked at history through the lens of contemporary politics. I was just as intrigued by facile attempts to construct the false binary of "authentic ideology" and "demonic ideology." I decided that the only effective strategy to address being stereotyped was remaining open-minded, encouraging dialogue, and rationally engaging with multiple perspectives, even limited ones.

How could I enable the young people I was addressing to revisit the historical events, cultural traditions, literary traditions, political awakenings, religious discourses, and identity politics of the past? Could they

recognize that some of those narratives had spilled into the present in distorted, revisionist, reinterpreted, or statist forms? How could I make their understanding vis-à-vis the once paradisiacal, now dismal land of my childhood and my dreams more layered? What would it take to get the youth to disavow insulated discourses about political, historical, religious, cultural, and social discourses and events that we can theorize, debate, and intellectually engage with? “Critical thinking and the Humanities,” Subramanian notes in my correspondence with her, “are more critical now than ever, especially in times when rising tides of fundamentalism sweep political parties and re-imagine entire nation-states, their histories, material reality, and future possibilities” (E-mail to author, 30 August 2020). History, politics, and sociocultural issues, I note, are “taught well only if” they are “presented together with a pedagogy” that enables the cultivation of “critical thinking,” encourages the use of a plethora of “sources,” and “an understanding” that, as I’ve said before, that history is not a seamless narrative (Nussbaum 287).

I also kept in mind that all of them had visceral connections with the issues I was talking about. I recognized that my lectures would be a lot more meaningful if I encouraged students to break their silence about their life experiences and provide them with a framework for their personal narratives. In order to do so, it was necessary for me to cultivate empathy. Sociologist Arlene Stein reminds us, “After trauma, we know there is typically a period in which silence and fragmented speech prevail” (17). Mental and emotional trauma when intergenerational is “very damaging as trauma results in suffering of not only the victims but also the witnesses. Suffering disconnects not only one generation from the other, but even people within the same generation. The isolation, alienation and the disconnection are a recipe for the frustration of the will to meaning which can lead to depression, alienation and addiction” (Kanda, e-mail to author, 7 July 2020). Traumatized people maintain a fragmented sense of self by relegating shameful feelings, which are triggered by trauma, to the background. With withdrawn and inhibited survivors of trauma, it is increasingly difficult to “find evidence of shame.” One, therefore, “must be an empathetic listener, analyzing what people tell us, as well as what they do not” (*ibid.*, 17). I would underscore that trauma which is not processed, whether “direct” or “transmitted,” is likely to produce “depression, anger, desires for revenge, frustration, and a wide variety of other conditions. It also produces physical illness” (Tauber, e-mail to author, 13 August 2020).

While I might not have been able to identify with some of the challenges that the students I was addressing, who had seen nothing outside of conflict, had faced at a young age, I could relate to them as a member of the same ethnic community. For me, cultivating empathy also entailed patiently listening to criticisms of the politics of members of my family and not getting emotionally embroiled in attempts to narrow my identity as a member of a political family. The challenge was to broaden not just the students', but my sense of identity as well. In a world of flux, mutability, and instability, people cling to allegiances that give them a sense of belonging, which they might not have thought through critically. Young people, in particular, can harbor strong and uncritical emotions about those loyalties and might feel guilty if encouraged to reconsider their worldviews. This is where educators can facilitate the evolutionary growth of students who might feel obligated to subscribe to a particularistic ideology because of their ethnic and religious affiliations:

Educators can support their students ... through their identity shifts by underscoring learning as a dynamic process that is complicated and has no endpoint. Practical ways to implement this in the classroom include commenting on, highlighting, and praising students for trying to articulate a different perspective. For example, ... educators can ask students to take the position of devil's advocate or assign different points of view to students in discussions and debates so as to make it clear to the class that they are relieved of the burden of ascribing to particular beliefs. ... Giving students opportunities to take different perspectives helps them to develop the ability to hold multiple and competing truths ... (Lin and Suyemoto 141)

I was aware then, as I am now, that it is far easier to propound a particularistic political and cultural ideology than it is to highlight nuanced opinions. I also recognized the exacting task of reinforcing the line of demarcation between religion and politics while it was being insidiously blurred by decision-makers of every hue.

Article 28 of the Constitution of India states, "no religious education shall be provided in any educational institution wholly maintained out of State funds." In 2002, the petition filed by a group of activists alleged that the deification of religion in the curriculum was in violation of Article 28 of the Constitution and the pluralism of India. The response of one of the judges of the three-judge panel of the Supreme Court of India left

much to be desired. Justice Shah, formerly a judge of the Gujarat High Court, ambiguously observes:

None can dispute that [the] past five decades have witnessed constant erosion of the essential social, moral and spiritual values and increase in cynicism at all levels. We are heading for a materialistic society disregarding the entire value based social system. None can also dispute that in secular society, moral values are of utmost importance ... for controlling wild animal instinct in human beings and for having civilized cultural society, it appears that religions have come into existence. Religion is the foundation for value base survival of human beings in a civilized society ... Value based education is likely to help the nation to fight against all kinds of prevailing fanaticism, ill-will, violence, dishonesty, corruption, exploitation, and drug abuse.

In countering Justice Shah's opinion, Nussbaum discerningly observes, "What he [Justice Shah] recommended was teaching specific norms as good norms. (He mentioned the Hindu teaching of dharma as one good example.) How could mere 'education about religions' counter the list of modern ills that he recognized? ... It would be acceptable to recommend values if the values in question were the basic ethical values underlying the democracy and its Constitution. It is not acceptable, in India's pluralistic democracy, to recommend religious values of any kind, however apparently vague or innocuous" (278). When religion and politics are conflated, national reconciliation and the evolution of democratic governance remain a pipe dream.

The ruling BJP has been brazenly muzzling political voices that are antithetical to its agenda of making India a Hindu Rashtra. But real democracies thrive on differences of opinions, not on gagging those who might not be on the same page. But what we are witnessing in present-day India, especially the BJP ruled states, is a systematic attempt at deterring the growth of democracy by depoliticizing citizens. I would argue that Hindutva politics effectively challenge secular ideas and forces of unity among two major communities of the country by preaching Islamophobia and demonizing 200 million Muslims. As I've said on other forums, communalism and its propagation should be regarded as a crime against humanity. Even today, there are people who do not tolerate an outlook that makes a distinction between communities and people. Many of us were taught not to discriminate between Hindus and Muslims. I was

taught that to believe that life was sacrosanct, regardless of religious affiliation. I was taught that any harm to a Hindu should be averted, because our religion, which underlines humanitarianism, emphasizes that it is our duty to protect our neighbor.

Peace activists can do a lot by highlighting human rights violations that occur in conflict zones—human rights violations for which the government as well as militant organizations are responsible. Of course as responsible citizens, we need to hold up a mirror to the state government as well as to the federal government and we can do that more easily because they are accountable to us in a democratic setup, more accountable than militant organizations are—but human rights violations by non-state actors need to be highlighted as well.

Every time I spoke at a college or university campus, it was my sincere hope that students would take the opportunity to engage with multiple subjectivities, historical understandings, and political opinions. Every lecture that I gave was an unpretentious attempt to facilitate the recognition of multiple paradigms that might not dismantle the status quo but would underscore the need to create democratic spaces and revivify the much-neglected role of civil society in the Jammu and Kashmir. I considered it incumbent upon me to patiently listen and respond to students' expressions of vexation at the injustices and inequities they witness in their neighborhoods/villages/towns/academic institutions. I was just as vexed by the realization that "As a nation, we have been counting on education to solve the problems of unemployment, joblessness, and poverty for many years. But education did not cause these problems, and education cannot solve them" (Anyon 3).

In the summer of 2019, I was invited to speak at the Center for International Relations, Islamic University of Science and Technology, which is in South Kashmir. I was acutely aware that I was talking to students who may not have had opportunities to delve into and engage with world-views that were radically different to theirs. So, I wanted to make sure that in encouraging them to take cognizance of perspectives that might not converge with their, I did not negate their experiences. I was adamant to create a safe environment in which students' would share their experiences of living and growing in a conflict zone, without exacerbating their sense of vulnerability. In order to facilitate a thoughtful exchange of ideas, it was necessary to create a level of trust, which is not easy to do in a community that faces devastation wreaked by violence. As Professor Alhawasi commented in her e-mail correspondence with me, "Trauma

can be dangerous. People can be easily manipulated when they are in a position of pain or weakness” (E-mail to author, 9 July 2020).

First off, giving lectures at various academic institutions across Kashmir Valley has been about my personal growth. I might have had more propositional knowledge than the students I addressed, but I could certainly enrich my repertoire with their experiential knowledge and encourage them to further reflect on it. Some of the students in the group that I addressed were affiliated to mainstream political organizations and had political ambitions, where-as others were skeptical about electoral politics and believed that mainstream political organizations lacked a representational character. When a couple of the students expressed their antipathy toward members of my family, who are prominent figures in the mainstream politics of Jammu and Kashmir, I intentionally decided that I would employ my skills of active listening and placing myself in the shoes of the questioner. As an educator who seeks to be an effective member of the global community, avoidance has never been an option for me. On the contrary, as I underscored in *The Life of a Kashmir Woman*, “Through my previous and current work I attempt to recount a peregrination, which still continues, through the agency, volatility, conflict, politics, and history of becoming Kashmiri. I will not deny that I am also trying to make sense of a ‘personal intellectual trajectory’.”

Although some of the questions that the students asked were potentially aggravating, my responses were not belligerent. As an educator, my goal is to facilitate the personal growth of students from all walks of life and their integration into their larger communities, so they can repair the tattered fabric of the society and culture. Silence, which is perpetuated because of various compulsions in a volatile zone, can create fissures and crevices in the sociocultural and political narrative, but it can also be a psychological mechanism to protect the fragile sense of self or survivors and their descendants. While forging dialogue with these students, I, subconsciously, drew an analogy between the impact of external factors on their identity formation and Stein’s delineation of the “palpable anxiety” experienced by children of Holocaust survivors, which significantly impacted “their subsequent life experiences, their sensibilities, outlook, and affect” (11). Having taught for several years, I realize that it is much easier to keep a lid on strong emotions if students are recipients of information, but I have never gained gratification from the mere delivery of lectures. In order to encourage students to break the silence and contextualize their experiences, it was necessary for me to relinquish some

control over the dissemination of information and the learning process. I couldn't sermonize or pontificate, because that would defeat the purpose. I will admit that it is with some degree of trepidation that I hand over control to students, because I don't always expect measured responses from them. But in order to making learning a meaningful and transformative experience, I have had to garner the courage to give primacy to their opinions, interpretations, and questions, which may cause discomfiture. But it was only by respectfully responding to students' questions that I could model the behavior that I hoped students would imbibe.

At my lecture at the Center for International Studies in 2019, I distinctly recall a student saying that mainstream politicians in Kashmir lacked a representative character, and he believed that the way could be led only by separatist politicians, who disavowed electoral politics. At the time, one of my maternal uncles and one of my maternal cousins were elected representatives. When the student expressed his skeptical opinion about electoral politics, I saw some of them make eye contact. I noticed others waiting for my response with bated breath. I was careful to steer clear of dismissing the student's opinion or making light of it. In my response to the student's explicit skepticism, I pointed out that conflict could not be mitigated without consensus-building. I underlined that in order to come to a negotiated settlement, every stakeholder, including elected representatives, would have to be brought to the table, and then common ground would have to be built. I saw several students nod in agreement. While covert and overt alliances were being built in the lecture hall, I could see a co-created space unfolding in which students' were attempting to analyze discourses that had played a large part in their identity formation.

I remained acutely aware that some of these students felt that they had been rendered invisible and their experiences discounted, but I did not lose sight of my goal, which was to encourage students to see the learning process as well as the development of their voice as works in progress. Most of the students in that lecture hall were from rural areas and belonged to large families that relied on agriculture for their sustenance. They did not come from privileged backgrounds or lives of ease. On the contrary, their energies were depleted by familial and economic demands, particularly during harvest season. It took more work to draw such students out and to motivate them to fully engage in the process of co-creating the learning experience.

While shaping class discussions, I could not neglect to take into consideration the level of comfort of speaking in class, which was not the same for every student. In order to encourage greater engagement, I did not relegate any layer of my identity to the background, nor did I shy away from discussions of my own class and cultural reality; and my own history, which is one among many ways of relating to the past. I underscored that I recognized that the terrain of cultural traditions was not seamless but slippery, and that there were plenty of questions and conflicts within them. I was also vocal about my own struggles with and evolving understanding of the complicated notions of political subjectivity, regionalism, and nationalism. I verbalized my discomfiture, at the risk of annoying some students and faculty members, with the monocultural entities created by the homogenizing discourses of cultural and religious nationalism. I am acutely aware that my concept of the political and sociocultural agency of Kashmiris, particularly Kashmiri women, is shaped by how I see my past, but that did not deter me from acknowledging the differing worldviews and progressively difficult actions that some students have had to take when faced with real challenges.

I was driven to share the multiple layers of my subjectivity with the students in order to demonstrate that they wouldn't be censured for critically analyzing and discussing ideologies and institutions that had impacted them, either positively or adversely. The onus for showing the students how one could be respectful of others' positions while remaining engaged in the material being discussed lay on me. I believed that I could bring a lot to the table by sharing my political and sociocultural contexts. In a similar vein, giving students the space to incorporate their personal histories/contexts into the framework within which the material was being discussed placed them in an agential capacity. "Education which encourages responsibility has impact outside classroom in the community" (Kanda, e-mail to author, 10 August 2020).

For instance, I was invited to the satellite campus of the University of Kashmir in Baramullah in 2017. I was asked by the director of that campus to conduct a thesis/dissertation workshop with their graduate students. The campus had a tranquil ambience and was like a retreat where even the most jaded academic would feel reinvigorated. Here, I take the liberty of reminding the reader that these students had grown up navigating the tempestuous winds of strife, combat, and low-intensity war. Their survival skills had been honed by learning not to trust easily and exercising caution while interacting with others, particularly those

they were not familiar with. I also wanted these students to recognize that they did not have to kowtow to representatives of the privileged center of the discourse of power (political, academic, cultural, religious, and institutional). By finding creative avenues of self-expression, students could challenge the hegemonic order, which had created structures that purportedly catered to its unquestioned authority. By breaking the ice and sharing their own stories, they could question the totalizing form of the discourse of the center, and its overpowering impulse to exclude and repress. By understanding how they were positioned and where they were coming from, students could employ their diverse lived experiences as therapeutic devices to heal historical and psychological traumas caused by systemic discrimination, which had created a sense of marginalization in the populace. I wanted them to understand that their unique experiences empowered them to carve trajectories for themselves.

I had also observed over the course of my interactions with students across the Kashmir Valley that they were caught in a double bind. While some of them clung to their religio-cultural identity in response to attempts by the federal government of India to assert its centralizing authority, they failed to recognize culture as a site that was dynamic and energized, and where psychological emancipation could be achieved. The cultural space that they were living in did not encourage ambiguity and contradiction as spaces of creativity, but, on the contrary, thrived on a sameness that broke the artistic spirit. How could I encourage these students, without imposing my own ideological position on them, to examine the psychological predicament in which they were caught? The political forces that reminded them about their autonomous religio-cultural identity sought to contain them just as much as state-sponsored forces did.

I recall a bright young woman at Abdul Ahad Azad Memorial Degree College in Bemina asking me if I thought it was necessary for Muslim women to cover their heads in the workplace. Here, I would remind the reader to keep in mind that all the female students in the audience had their heads covered. I chose to see our shared space in the lecture hall as an opportunity to explore and co-construct what it meant to break the walls of silence about nuanced religio-cultural norms. I was cognizant that challenging or even thinking through such norms was discouraged by conventional understandings of morality and propriety. But I believed that as an educator, it wouldn't behoove me to rely on avoidance as a

strategy. While keeping their sensibilities in mind, I considered it incumbent upon me to encourage them to undertake honest intellectual inquiry. I responded that religio-cultural values were capricious and subject to personal discretion. I believed that in order to develop holistically, it was necessary for them to find a fine balance between protecting themselves and engaging with diverse interpretations of culture and religious laws to lead authentic lives.

The efficacy of transformative learning was reinforced by my colleague Professor Claudia Buckmaster who observes, “We do not learn from mere theory, but rather from the concrete experiences we can relate to the theory itself. Most successful adults I know do exactly this through the process of reflection on their own or, sometimes, through having close friends with whom they discuss situations in their lives. Many of our students, however, have not developed the habit of reflecting on their lives, so seem doomed to keep making the same mistakes over and over again without learning they have it in themselves to make different, better choices” (E-mail to author, 25 June 2020). Through the process of reflecting on one another’s experiences, students can initiate the work of healing from traumatic experiences and fostering the authenticity of their voices.

In 2018, I also spoke at Sheikh-Ul-Alam Memorial Degree College in Budgam, which is in central Kashmir. Located on an elevation with a scenic view, the college was inviting, and I was happy to address a large group of vibrant students there. All of them were individuals within a complex and multifaceted social and political context. The students were Kashmiris with distinct historical, cultural, and linguistic characteristics determined by their continuing integration in the family and community structure in Kashmir. They had, knowingly and unwittingly, cultivated the psychological strength to adapt to conflict, trauma caused by deaths of family members and acquaintances. They were coming to terms with growing religious and sectarian divides, cataclysmic political changes, and unemployment as social, political, and economic realities in Kashmir. The trauma generated by conflict had been inhibiting for some of them and had resulted in the attenuation of their drive; but for others, had vitalized their dreams and dedication. Some of them did not come from families in which intergenerational bonds had been forged by sharing memories, teaching the younger generation about history.

While living in a fragmented society driven by vested interests, some of them were facing loss of self-pride and social networks, but they

had, undoubtedly, demonstrated the ability to survive. At the end of my lecture, a female student raised her hand and articulated the sense of helplessness that plagued her. She was eloquent, confident, and spoke with an enviable clarity of mind. She had gone to the same high school as I, Presentation Convent, and strongly voiced her desire to pursue higher education in the West like I had, but she couldn't see her way out of the cracks and crevices of the daily grind in Kashmir. To me, this student bespoke determination and the strength to reconstruct a new life. But the social-psychological problems that she and other students like her were facing were aggravated by growing religious, sectarian, and ethnic violence on college and university campuses across the country. For such students, "group mobilization and coalition-building" could, potentially, provide "vehicles with which to gain greater access to resources and demand political power" (Kiang 26). Are the multifaceted backgrounds, needs, and strengths of such students recognized within academia?

I wasn't sure if students felt integrated into social and intellectual communities of the college or university where they were studying. From my research on the struggle and survival of students at academic institutions, particularly for students who shoulder the demands of family responsibilities and jobs as well, those that are integrated academically as well as socially within institutions tend to thrive. Given that the institutions I spoke at catered to rural populations, which have been greatly impacted by the unrest in Jammu and Kashmir, it was important for these students to not feel isolated and to be able to reach out to faculty members. Having been raised in a circumscribed environment, which was made more constrictive by the vagaries of conflict, these students walked on eggshells. And, as far as I could tell, they lacked the vocabulary and other tools to integrate their experiences into their academic work.

Students' feelings of isolation are enhanced by their inability to raise questions in the classroom. Having been raised in Kashmir, I am well aware that in that culture students are not encouraged to voice their opinions and raise questions that an academic worth her/ his salt should be legitimately prepared to answer. I remember being particularly struck by the hesitance displayed by female students at the Government College for Women in Anantnag, South Kashmir, where I spoke in the summer of 2019. My presentation at that college was on theoretical frameworks within which historical and political events could be analyzed. It didn't take me long to realize that my talk would be more impactful if I encouraged to students to ask questions that they thought were pertinent. The

students at that academic institution were rooted in their family contexts and background dimensions as rural, underprivileged, and gender minorities. They sought motivation through stories of conflict, persecution, ethnic and gender discrimination, and a disrupted social life. Although several of those students were not well integrated into the academic and social dimensions of the institution, their tenuous status as survivors in a conflict zone gave them direction to make it through college.

I distinctly recall my discomfiture when I realized that my high-falutin vocabulary was creating an invisible divide between me and the students I was addressing. It was difficult to endure the expressions of incomprehension I saw on several faces. It was at that critical moment that I set my paper aside and proceeded to forge dialogue with the students. All of them had, undoubtedly, come of age in fragile circumstances. Many of them shared anecdotes/stories that illustrated their experiences as rural and gender minorities. They recounted their sentiments of insecurity, impermanence, and feeling objectified in a zone that was trammled by competing religio-political and gender discourses. Their nagging sense of marginalization as a pigeonholed ethnic group and as women could act as a powerful motivating force for them to pursue higher education if accompanied by tangible family involvement, of which I didn't see evidence. With the pursuit of higher educations and the opportunities that creates, these students could see changing gender roles in their neck of the woods, but I got a clear sense of male faculty members not wishing to concede space to their students, because that would result in the challenging of chauvinistic attitudes and loss of traditional social roles.

I remember a bright young student bringing up the brutalization and ruthless murder of eight-year-old Asifa in Kathua district of Jammu province in 2018. She had the objectivity to point out that in Kashmir outrage against Asifa's violent sodomy and murder as well as other crimes of a similar nature was not conditioned by the atrocity of the crime, but by the religious and political affiliation of the victim and the perpetrator. In response, I pointed out that attempts to drown the voices of progressive women into oblivion became more frequent with the onset of militancy and counterinsurgency in 1989–1990. I emphasized that the political and social exigencies of the women of Jammu and Kashmir could be addressed in more nuanced and purposeful ways. I was quick to add that asymmetrical gender hierarchies legitimized by the forceful dissemination of militarized and fundamentalist discourses portend the debasement of women. And in practice, gender violence is a consistent

feature of the riots and political thuggery that spasmodically grip South Asia. The wretchedness of the crime committed against Asifa bore testimony to the intersecting notions of family, nation, and community. The horrific stories of women, which are in most instances attributed to folklore, underscore the complicity of official and nationalist historiography in perpetuating these notions. I underscored that the feminization of the “homeland” as the “motherland” for which nationalists are willing to lay down their lives served, in effect, to preserve native women in pristine retardation (for further details, see my piece on “Impact of Kashmir Atrocities on Women”).

My response was vociferously countered by a couple of male faculty members, who bawled that native Kashmiri men could not be accused of harassing native women, sexually or otherwise. For me, their response was a reminder that in our urgency to play to the gallery, which in this case would be the patriarchal structure, we forget to see girls and women as individuals in their own right, not merely as repositories of communal and traditional values.

I saw a similar dynamic at the Government Degree College in Beerwah, Central Kashmir. I gave a talk on women’s empowerment and the role of women in education at that college in 2018. Again, my attempt was to encourage students to voice their opinions without fear of reprisal. I noticed, during the question and answer session, that the female students were relatively reticent, and I had to work hard to draw them out. At the risk of alienating the male students in the room, I beseeched their female counterparts to speak up. In response to my earnest entreaty, a charming young man magnanimously said that he wondered why his female peers were hesitant to express their opinions. His seemingly innocuous statements provoked a quick response from one of the female students in the room, who were unable to restrain herself any longer. She acerbically said that girls/women had not been allowed to share their opinions with the communities they were part of without fear of being mocked or excoriated. She reminded her male peers that they had not become acculturated to notions of gender equality and expansion of economic opportunities for women. I could clearly see that she and her ilk were developing a sense of gender consciousness. While the female students at that college identified with traditional culture and felt the pressure to toe the line by not vocally challenging gender norms, they recognized that higher education provided them with opportunities to map their stories of survival and persistence. But I came away with the nagging feeling that a lot more

could be done to enable students, across the board, to function as productive members of their classroom communities, facilitating their integration into both the academic and social dimensions of college life.

“All sectors of student and adult Kashmiri society would benefit from a national project of carefully constructed dialogues,” according to international peacebuilding expert Dr. Paula Green, “thereby breaking the silence and isolation, acknowledging grievances and harms done, grasping the development of competing narratives and perceptions, and enabling Kashmiris to redeem their nation’s soul through a shared love for the land and its people” She goes on to elaborate, “Together, the population of Jammu and Kashmir might find the courage to face the truth of their brokenness and betrayals, mourn their losses, and turn their despair into empowerment for the sake of their own healing and the health of future generations. Through this process, the people of Jammu and Kashmir, from all walks of life, could offer each other the respect and dignity that each individual craves, commit to meeting the basic needs of all members of the community, and reweave the tattered web of connections, restorations and mutuality in which all can safely thrive” (E-mail to author, 16 September 2020).

I employ Psychologist Laura S. Brown’s definition of collectivist ethnic culture to emphasize that in Jammu and Kashmir and other parts of South Asia, people “may be particularly vulnerable to insidious trauma because harm done to one extends to others through bonds of family connection. With family often defined well outside the limits of legality or biology, the potential for trauma to be a factor in the distress experienced by persons of target group ethnicities is high indeed” (161). How can a culturally competent educator effectively consider gender and cultural identities in order to weave the implications of traumatic experiences into the complex identities of the students?



Education Conscientizes About Social and Political Conditions

Education, whether at the grassroots level or in institutions on higher education, ideally, enables greater participation in decision-making processes that impact the larger community. I recalled Nussbaum's anecdote about a "program in rural Bihar run by the Patna-centered NGO Adithi," which, despite the lack of infrastructure, encouraged "creative education." Nussbaum, on her visit to that NGO, noted that the women who were enrolled in the adult literacy program were stimulated by the assignment of delineating the "power structure of their village," because they recognized that the ability to "read and write" gave them the tools to criticize "entrenched structures of power" (282). They celebrate "education as an antidote to fear and oppression" (ibid., 283). I would argue that students in rural as well as urban areas require teachers that are passionately invested in and involved with the educational process. If educators and students are focused merely on rote learning, their imaginations become impoverished, further conscripting their intellectual and emotional capabilities. Such students lack the tools to effectively question the authority or will of others. They also lack insight into the forms, wielding, and distribution of civic power. In several parts of the world, including India, "the status quo ante was a deadening education that imposed learning from outside, with little attention to the growing mind of the child" (ibid., 284).

Were students in academic institutions in Jammu and Kashmir being treated like automatons? Was enough being done to enable these students to articulate their own stories while developing curricula and applied research? Did they have the vocabulary to delineate their experiences and understanding? Students majoring in various disciplines/professions require the support of faculty. Faculty members can play an incomparable role in enabling students to build confidence, develop holistically, and cultivate skills that would enable them to attain academic success. On July 15, 2019, I was invited to the University of Kashmir, Srinagar, to make a presentation on “Effective teaching-learning process, and my experience of teaching in the United States” as part of the 83rd General Orientation Course. The objective of these courses as delineated in the newsletter of the University Grants Commission (UGC)-Human Resource Development Center of the University of Kashmir is to “provide adequate opportunities for the professional, personality and career development of teachers in higher education system within the framework of knowledge society and to inculcate values, motivation, and skills required in their art of teaching” [sic]. The audience at my presentation comprised 42 newly appointed teachers/lecturers of various colleges and universities across Jammu and Kashmir.

Keeping the mission underlined above in mind, I decided it would be best to forge dialogue with my audience by discussing strategies that worked best in the classroom for each one of us. In order to generate discussion and not deliver a monologue, it was necessary for me to establish a rapport with them and acknowledge their cultural emphasis on deference to authority figures, which made them rely on their students’ ability to learn by rote instead of encouraging them to “unveil the ‘truth’ of human existence and experience” (Zhan 98). Nussbaum takes note of the “deeper flaws in India’s system (or systems, in the various states) of public education.” She notes “an excessive emphasis on rote learning and ‘teaching to the test’” as major deficiencies that hinder the intellectual growth of students (265). More pertinently, she observes that while science and technology are two growing areas of interest in India, the virtues of critical thinking and freedom to broaden intellectual horizons, which are “so crucial to the health of a democracy, are sorely neglected” (265).

I recognized that presenting myself as a know-it-all Western-trained academic would be anathema to the people I was addressing and would end up alienating them. I also took cognizance of the diversity of the

group I was addressing. Although all the young academics in the audience had come of age in the conflictual years of Jammu and Kashmir, it was not a homogeneous group. They varied in terms of quality of education, ethnicity, primary language, and socioeconomic status. They also varied in terms of their research skills, understanding of heterogeneity, facility with the English language, acculturation to an urban environment or lack thereof, and ability to generate a creative exchange of ideas in the classroom. There were very few female teachers/lecturers in the group, a couple of whom wore *burgas* and did not remove their face coverings during my interactions with them. Although I was sensitive to the additional pressures on female academics to conform to gender norms, particularly in a conservative society, it was a bit of an adjustment for me to address people whose facial expressions were not visible. While it wasn't my intention to touch anyone's raw nerve, I pointed out, with as much subtlety as I could muster, that none of us was above her/his "own conflicts, ambivalences, rage, helplessness, losses, feelings of revenge, guilt, hope, and other internal processes resulting from large-group conflicts—or simply due to some events in our personal environments" (Volkan, "Enemies"). Were we, as responsible educators, inclined to weave "the influence of external events and traumas associated with those events" into our pedagogy and practice without detracting from our students' sense of agential capacities and ability to exert control? (Volkan, *Nazi Legacy* 9).

In order to set the stage for an exchange of ideas, I began by examining my own subjectivity, biases, and perceptions. It has been my persistent endeavor, particularly at the public talks that I give, to encourage students/researchers/faculty to examine the purported notion of "objectivity" in research and teaching. "The complexity" of human subjectivities "presents a special challenge to researchers when they interpret and reflect on how personal values influence those interpretations" (Zhan 98). I then went on to assess how the pedagogical methods, which I employ in my classes, are suffused with ideologies and discourses that had impacted my identity formation. I believed then, as I do now, that in order to empower our students with a sense of agency as well as a sense of responsibility to themselves and the larger community, it was incumbent upon us to analyze our motives. Was I guilty of imposing my own values and biases on the texts and materials I discussed in my classes? Or did I successfully encourage my students to challenge the dominant culture's stereotypical interpretations? Did I give my students the tools to observe,

with clarity, the role that “historical events and traumas play ... in structuring individuals’ personal psychology throughout generations” (Volkan 13)? Could they appreciate nuanced opinions and articulate their own positions effectively?

Educators that are sensitized to political, ethnic, linguistic, religious, and gender differences assess and evaluate how their perspectives impact their pedagogy. It is my firm conviction that a holistic education is not merely about the memorization of “facts,” data, and statistics, but is “personally meaningful, socially relevant, culturally accurate, pedagogically sound, and politically responsible” (Zhan 102). I have found that an educator cannot fulfill her/his responsibility of positively molding young minds unless she/he examines and analyzes the “dangerous prejudices” to which she/he might be susceptible. Educators who have not worked with diverse cultural and social groups might lack the self-reflexivity to evaluate their “sentiments about the Other” and how to avoid transmitting those unexamined and prejudicial notions “to the generations” after theirs (Volkan, *Enemies*). In order to delve into the labyrinthine worlds of human emotions, ideologies, hegemonies, and the creation of a conducive cultural environment, I described the learning needs of my students in Oklahoma, and my constant endeavors to improve their learning needs of by assigning critical thinking tasks to them, which enhanced their sense of autonomy

I thought the most effective way of bridging the divide between my experience with American students and their experiences with Kashmiri students would be by relating an anecdote about teaching Kashmir in an Oklahoma classroom, which I had written about for a couple of publications. In spring 2010, I taught translations of Kashmiri short stories in my Senior Seminar on World Literature at the University of Oklahoma. Efficacious teaching, for me, intertwines critical thinking with civic engagement and activism. The students asked several insightful questions during the discussion, some of which were, “What is the political status of Kashmir?” “Are any women in positions of decision making in that part of the world?” “Is the exotic description of Kashmir in novels, poems, and travelogues an attempt to dehistoricize and decontextualize the region and its people?” “How is the reductive portrayal of Kashmir as a romantic and exotic locale going to make the primarily Western readership of, for example, some short stories on Kashmir and Salman Rushdie’s *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* aware of the political upheaval in the region?” “Why are we talking about political allegory?” “Is there an inextricable link

between pedagogy and politics?” “Why can’t the intelligentsia in Kashmir and diasporic Kashmiri intellectuals forge a coalition to come up with feasible solutions to the conundrum?”

My students had been unaware of the political swamp in Kashmir prior to our discussion. It was, therefore, encouraging to hear them make intelligent comments about worldviews other than Western-centric ones. I recounted that my students had discerningly debated issues of sovereignty; representative nature of democracy or lack thereof; discourse of human rights and the duty of international powers to protect fundamental rights in politically conflictual environments, pluralism as an antidote to the orthodoxy of ethnocentric politics, the construction of identity politics, and the implosion of the boundary between state and religion. My attempt was to provide instantiations of how analogous reasoning can be employed to process unfamiliar information and debate problem-solving ideas.

As I’ve said on other forums, the perpetuation of a politics that creates and emphasizes cultural myopia and monocultural identities in diverse societies would be the bane of our existence (“Extremism is the Bane of Our Existence”). In order to keep bigotry, which is manifesting itself in various shapes and forms all over the world, younger generations need to be exposed to the multiplicity in their societies and politics in respectful, inquisitive, self-reflexive, and critical atmosphere (see also Nussbaum 301).

Those of us who seek to empower the youth through our roles as educators must have the foresight to pay attention to whether the legislation and execution of political, economic, and social policies and programs in contemporary South Asia are successfully addressing women’s as well as men’s experiences and concerns. While focusing on reforms within institutions of higher learning is important, it is just as important, if not more, to envision new ways of healing traumas caused by conflict and power relations within a hierarchic patriarchal structure. I consider it necessary to envision fresh strategic interventions that would take cognizance of people’s experiential knowledge as well as lived experiences vis-à-vis displacement, social disruptions, and political disenfranchisement.

Although women in that part of the world are politically empowered in terms of the constitution giving them the right to vote; the right to run for public office; the right to an equal education, and equal work for equal pay, those rights, I would argue, are not implemented with

adequate rigor. I would also like to out that women continue to face seeming insurmountable cultural barriers. An analogy with the United States would make my point clearer: the United States had a woman presidential candidate for the very first time in 2016, even though women have enjoyed constitutional rights for decades. Likewise, Kashmiri women enjoy political rights, and Jammu and Kashmir had a woman head of government from 2016 to 2018. But there are cultural barriers that women run into and then there are regressive interpretations of religions, which legitimize the subjugation of women. It takes time for it to dawn on people, especially those who subscribe to literal interpretations of religious scriptures, that society cannot grow and evolve without the full participation of educated women. A fear that plagues conservative societies is that educated women veer away from or undermine religion, but, historically, dynamic political movements—even the movement for India's independence from the British—have been nourished by liberated and emancipated women, who developed their political identities within a religious and familial framework.

Having been educated at a missionary school with Irish-Catholic nuns as my educators, I had grown up speaking and writing the English language with ease. My education had given me the tools to express myself with clarity and confidence in an international language. But not every student in South Asia, particularly Jammu and Kashmir, has that privilege. At the energizing discussion I had with the students of Abdul Ahad Azad Memorial Degree College in Bemina, which is on the outskirts of the capital city of Jammu and Kashmir, Srinagar, a student requested permission to ask his question in Kashmiri. I was sensitive to the student's fear of being unable to adequately express himself in English, which, at the end of the day, wasn't his native language. The student asked perceptive question on the politics of translation in the classroom. He asked if it was legitimate to request a professor to translate an English passage/report/or query into Kashmiri, particularly for those students whose socioeconomic backgrounds did not give them opportunities to gain familiarity with the English language. My response was that the purpose of education was to broaden students' horizons by pedagogical innovation. Individuals become empowered to make decipher their multifaceted worlds through the vehicle of education. I strongly believe that young people cannot become productive members of their families, communities, and societies unless they are given the environment to heal and become resilient.

In the same session, I noticed a faculty member snigger when a highly self-conscious student attempted to ask a question in Americanized English. It was, perhaps the insecurity of sounding undereducated that led the student to ask the question with a twang. Regardless, I appreciated his courage to come out of his shell and overcome his shyness. But I was struck by the contradiction that although there was a critical mass of Kashmiri students in the lecture hall as well as Kashmiri faculty members, their voices were not encouraged. That incident reinforced my recognition that it was imperative for educators to become more engaged and advocate for their students.

My perceptions became even better grounded after I talked with Professor Betty J. Harris about her experiences in southern Africa. Betty Harris conducted field research in Lesotho, Swaziland, and South Africa. During her Lesotho field research, she became conscientized about refugees and others involved in the anti-apartheid movement during many extensive discussions, thereby broadening her perspective beyond a US Civil Rights prism. At the time, many thought that apartheid would come to an end through violent revolution instead of a negotiated settlement. Today, there are “born-frees,” those born after the end of apartheid in 1994, who think that the negotiated settlement did not go far enough in addressing issues of racial, political, and gender inequality, and entertain the idea of revolution anew. Professor Harris believes that in order for younger generations to channelize their anger, sense of alienation, and take the political process forward without playing into anyone’s hands, “education has to be made more relevant to youthful experiences.” She categorically asserts that “the educational process is essential in shaping youth intellectual maturity and autonomy, and one’s ability to form new organizational structures.” Harris reminds the reader that education, however, “is a slow process in which there may have to be interruptions requiring more immediate action. Such interruptions must be incorporated into the entire learning process, in which we may have to learn from our mistakes as well. That is praxis” (E-mail to author, 15 July 2020). Those interruptions that required immediate action were evident in the academic institutions I visited in the Kashmir Valley.

Every interaction/conversation with students across the Valley led me to think about the disadvantages that Kashmiri students, particularly those in rural areas, face: limited proficiency in the English language; gnawing feelings of alienation from mainstream society; uncertainty looming large; premonitory feelings generated by living in a dysfunctional society. Several

of the students I met with belong to marginalized communities who have been demonized by mainstream discourse as either criminals, or incorrigibly backward, or irredeemably radicalized. How can they be reintegrated into mainstream society, so they can contribute to the regeneration of the nation to which they belong? “If members of our younger generations,” Tabbernee remarked in response to my concerns, had reason to believe that when they articulated their concerns on “issues important to them (especially issues of social justice),” policymakers, “with the power to change things for the better, would listen to them with dignity and respect,” they would be able to channel their anger and sense of alienation by concentrating on those issues of political and sociocultural import. They would not take recourse in merely protesting by lashing out at society in a general sense. It is unfortunate that “many politicians” give young people short shrift by not taking them seriously, “even when they raise extremely important societal issues such as gun violence in American schools,” either because politicians do not consider young people knowledgeable and credible enough to have viable solution “to such societal issues,” or because the politicians are too involved in partisan politics, playing to the gallery, and are influenced by powerful lobbying groups, “such as the National Rifle Association [NRA] lobby in respect of the gun violence issue,” which might impact their political future and “re-election to office.” The youth becomes demoralized “by what they rightly consider to be political game-playing by politicians” rather than elected representatives and decision-makers accomplishing that tasks they were elected to attempt to accomplish and propounding feasible solutions to “the problems that society faces.” If those in positions of power, Tabbernee emphasizes, “would simply start” by paying heed to young people and taking them seriously, building “trust,” and making “realistic promises about what they are able and prepared to do about the issues raised by the young people (and then keep those promises!),” the political process could become gratifying for every stakeholder. Young people could then move forward without playing into the hands of vested interests.

Populaces in conflict zones are caught in a double bind: between militarization and brutalization caused by governments and militant/militia movements. They are dealing with an attempt to conflate politics and religion. In response to my question on what it would take to get younger generations to channelize their anger and sense of alienation in

order to bring long-term stability in Jammu and Kashmir, Professor Misri thoughtfully remarked,

The issues raised are of vital importance and need to be addressed urgently, with a fresh perspective and perception. A prolonged conflict damages the life of a community. Long periods of torturous imprisonments, loss of family members, sexual exploitation, rape, kidnappings of women, displacement of population and custodial - deaths, disorient the minds of younger generations. Disoriented minds generate bitter feelings of alienation, isolation and feelings of rejection. These embittered generations can be involved in purposeful activities only in a conducive atmosphere. This calls for drastic changes in the existing oppressive systems and structures. The crisis has deepened with the passing of times. The issues have become more complicated and increased the numbers of alienated generations. To carry the political process forward without playing into anyone's hands has to be given top priority. It is a very challenging task. We need to devise a sound strategy and move forward carefully with great patience. The geo-strategic position of the affected areas in the Kashmir region will also have to be calculated as a significant factor in working out a solution which excludes the possibility of playing into anyone's hands. (E-mail to author, 9 July 2020)

I recall a one-on-one conversation with a student at Abdul Ahad Azad Memorial Degree College in Bemina, who requested me to visit his college again that year. When I told him that in all likelihood I would give another lecture at his college the following year, he poignantly observed that the volatility in Kashmir had cast a pall of uncertainty and gloom over people's lives. He emphasized his loss of interest in life and inability to cultivate interest in the partially foreseeable future. With a wan smile and a wavering voice, he told me that there was no guarantee that he would be present at my lecture the following year. Planning for the future required unflinching faith and an unshakable confidence, which, given the tottering climate of Kashmir, he did not have.

Why does a community lose interest in what the future holds? What strategies does a community employ to obliterate the violence it has witnessed? I was wracked by these questions when I was invited to give a talk at the Maulana Azad Government College for Women in the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, Srinagar. Having taught at that college for a couple of years before I moved to the United States in 1998, I was familiar with the nooks and crannies of the campus and was recognized

by the staff, which perked my spirits. I saw the potential for personal growth in the large group of students I addressed that day. Most of them were students of English Literature and were struggling to employ works of literature to create a coherent narrative of the fragmented society they lived in. They were making sincere attempts to parse their experiences and create meaning from the ongoing upheaval and commotion in their environment. Through the works of a varied range of writers, some of whom were J. M. Coetzee, Salman Rushdie, V. S. Naipaul, and Anita Desai, they were trying to generate meaning from the normalization of armed conflict and its ramifications. Their noteworthy endeavor to stitch together a narrative of survival included discussions about the dehistoricization and decontextualization of the region and the diverse communities in it.

Deliberating on the inextricable link between pedagogy and politics brought to the fore the importance of placing their current reality within a larger context to understand systemic injustices, and untangle the seemingly impenetrable maze of social silence. In discussing political allegory, we underlined the risks of breaking down the walls of silence by sharing personal and community traumas. I emphasized that I had observed in the collection of essays on Jammu and Kashmir that I edited in 2012, *Parchment of Kashmir*, that in the process of nationalist self-imagining, the deployment of allegory, as some Kashmiri short story writers have done in their works, can be used to re-create and preserve a jeopardized way of life. Such narratives create symbols of nationhood and can impart resolvability to a disharmonious history.

I was reminded by a student in the audience about the anti-intellectualism behind pigeonholing an entire community and its political experience as “colonial repression” or “imperial subjugation.” During our discussion, the students took into account the agency or lack thereof displayed by regional political actors in the over three decades of strife. While we were employing works of literature to contextualize community history, familial and community identities, and drawing the line of demarcation between history and contemporary politics, I was gratified that some of the students recognized that danger of eliding nuances. I saw the enthusiasm of the students to share their perspectives as a repudiation of the “culture of silence.” As former principal of this college, Krishna Misri remarked,

Living in a constant milieu of violence is living in a totalitarian disposition with no individual rights and liberty. The atmosphere all around is

surcharged with despair and despondency. A sense of loss of belonging and social moorings takes over. People become wary of expressing their views outside the closed doors of their homes for fear of consequences. The result is lack of trust even in personal and familial relationships. People learn to speak in whispers! All kinds of unscrupulous forces like intelligence operatives, extortion agents, and others appear on the scene. Disinformation and false rumors are spread. Inhumane methods of punishment are applied by law enforcement officials. Torture chambers are set up to punish the guilty and contain the rising waves of discontent. Absurd as it may sound but conflict zones generate a new culture—"a culture of silence" The culture of silence changes the basic psychological moorings of the people and makes them cynical, skeptical, and suspicious. A crisis of confidence follows. The affected communities revert back to pre-civilized conditions of existence - a state of abysmal uncertainty, fear, and indignity.

No civilized society can survive in such inhuman and uncertain conditions for long. A transformative strategy needs to be worked out to find a way out of the malaise in which we find ourselves at present. The old mindsets have to change. With open minds and innovative ideas we should move ahead. The problem becomes more and more complex with passing times. (E-mail to author, 9 July 2020)

It was clear to me that the student-centered approach that I had employed at that talk had enabled the creation of a contextually sensitive environment. My effort to encourage students to see the personal significance of historical events and evolution of the political and national consciousness of the community paid off when I saw them veer away from the self-defeating option to wallow in self-pity or play the victim. Instead, I saw inklings of the students taking charge by identifying themselves as survivors and infusing meaning into their lives. The perspectives of the students were further enriched by the analogies they drew between their experiences in Kashmir with experiences of those navigating challenging terrain in South Africa, the Caribbean, and other parts of South Asia.

Can an entire community or generation be beset with anomie as a result of conflict? Professor Krishna Misri commented that considering that "all kinds of men and women are found in every community." Seemingly interminable violence transforms communities in hitherto inconceivable ways and brings about "fundamental changes in the ways of living" as well as morals, ethics, and values of the community that has been impacted by the conflict. "Traditional patterns of living" as well the richness of a common heritage and cultural diversity are smashed to

smithereens. Conflict takes a heavy toll on society, and “changes it for the worse.” Subsequently, fault lines of caste, religion, ethnicity, and political affiliations increase and become deeply entrenched. “Target killings, violations of women’s bodies—all kinds of heinous crimes and riots,” Misri notes, “become common occurrences.” Voices of sanity that attempt to rise above the clamorous and cacophonous voices of hostility and antagonism “are conveniently ignored and ruthlessly suppressed by forces inimical to them.” These forces thrive on the fear and horror created by warring groups and “have developed vested interests in the newly established perverse socio-political set-up” (E-mail to author, 9 July 2020). The politics of the people get left out in the battle of narratives in a politically turbulent zone.

“An entire community can be beset by tragedy”, Mojzes reminds us, and that is a tragedy of greater proportions that we might realize. “Often during deep-seated crises, very destructive leaders can emerge who use their charisma to make the situation worse.” Such leaders fabricate stories and spin a web of lies in order to “manipulate (or try to) an entire group, even nation or region. They demonize certain group, often minorities, and direct the discontentment of the populace with economic and political policies toward the vilified groups. After having successfully turned the rage of the majority toward the scapegoated minority, “they make false promises that when the minority is destroyed, everything will be alright.” “History” is replete with examples of such grotesque leaders “who caused millions of deaths and only increased misery.” Mojezs tells me he doesn’t need to give examples, but, “regretfully at this historical moment” there are countless examples of “such autocrats on the right and the left” (Mojzes, E-mail to author, 17 July 2020).

With increasing polarization in several parts of the world and ruthless battles of narratives, the trials and tribulations of people; the wailing of tender-hearted mothers whose sons were waiting to plunge into life but were silenced by militancy; the apathy of young educated persons who thought the world was their oyster but now have nothing to look forward to because of militancy, militarization, and communal/caste politics are all eclipsed in the ruthless battle of narratives. The only ones to claim the right of navigation in this slough are vested interests. When an entire community or generation is impacted by trauma which is left unhealed, Tabbernee remarks, “many or even all members of that community/generation not only live with permanent disillusionment but also lose hope that they can ever (again) live in a just and equitable

society.” Commenting on the anomie that may beset an entire generation in a conflict zone, Tabbernee notes the calamitous fallout of the “total distrust of rules and societal norms,” which occurs primarily because the “rules and norms” that people had been conditioned to conform to had failed to keep them “safe from the trauma they were experiencing as a community/generation.” As a result of the demoralization and disillusionment pervasive in the community/generation, its members became increasingly skeptical of the values of “adhering to those norms.” While the “personal conscience” of individuals may remain alive and well, “the community/generation as a whole may become amoral, especially with respect to rules/norms imposed on them by what are perceived to be ‘illegitimate authorities,’ such as occupying forces or ‘corrupt politicians’” (E-mail to author, 10 August 2020).

Furthering my quest for drawing analogies between fragmented political systems and widening disparities in religious and racial groups, I asked Professor of Anthropology Betty J. Harris to comment on the apathy and moral turpitude caused by anomie in the context of her work in southern Africa, during and subsequent to the apartheid era. Professor Harris observes:

To move forward, the youth must create some level of social engagement in order to provide future leadership. In many parts of the “developing world,” youth are the largest segment of the population and pose a challenge to those governments. Therefore, youth must prepare themselves to step up to the plate to grapple with issues, to provide new ideas, and to participate in the political process at the local, provincial, and national levels (E-mail to author, 15 July 2020).

Education can be deployed as an effective tool in intergenerational family communication regarding sociocultural trauma. Logotherapist Alphonse Kanda, on whose work I expound in the next chapter, notes that “education can be an effective tool in intergenerational family communication only if it is redefined from being a system of knowledge and traditions transmission from one generation to the next to a holistic educational system.” In an e-mail to me, he quotes the founder of logotherapy Viktor Frankl (I have expounded on the efficacy of Frankl’s emphasis on the “will to meaning” in a later section), to emphasize that holistic education “allows the development of the ‘full capacity of conscience’ includes the ability to responsibly respond to the call or

demand of each moment in life” (Frankl, *The Will to Meaning: Foundations and Applications of Logotherapy*, 64; e-mail to author, 6 June 2020).

Education stretches the mind with new ideas, because educated people cannot be enslaved or lead like cattle. Education makes it possible to question structural inequities and to demand remedy. Education enables us to recognize and articulate expressions of concern about backwardness, poverty, illiteracy. It makes possible the rise of people’s politics (Khan, “Education of Change”). Are young people in several parts of the world, particularly in conflict zones, lackadaisical, because they are convinced that regardless of their relentless efforts to make the world a better place, the status quo will remain unchanged? While mobilizing cultural and political coalitions is riddled with conflict, is it the need of the day for us to engage in these processes?

Such an experiment in international conflict transformation is already underway, according to Paula Green, who in 1997 founded a program for graduate students and others from zones of conflict around the world. She tells us that “Conflict Transformation Across Cultures,” known by its acronym, CONTACT, provides an intensive residential educational experience for approximately sixty participants each summer for three weeks at the School for International Training in Vermont, where Green is currently Professor *emerita*. It was augmented by a similar two-week program in Kathmandu Nepal specifically for South Asian participants who often cannot obtain visas for the US. In these programs, the learning is 24/7 day and night, as participants not only engage in class activities all day but live together and spend weekends in building relationships that would otherwise never exist. Many participants meet the identified “other” of their nation’s conflict at CONTACT, which allows, for example, Indians and Pakistanis, Israelis and Palestinians, Christians, Muslims, Jews, Buddhists, Hindus, urban dwellers, villagers, and pastoralists, a rainbow of racial backgrounds, and others divided by history and geography to humanize those they have been taught to hate and fear. “The transformation that arises from this carefully designed laboratory creates a kind of freedom where the silence of their suffering is broken, their empathy increases by leaps and bounds, and palpable expressions of love pervade this newly built global community. Participants share heart-rendering memories of war and demonstrate to each other, by their very presence, the capacity for resilience, caring, and compassion. They explore the demands for justice, the need for truth and reconciliation, and the

centrality of social inclusion, which they are practicing as they speak. Having drawn inspiration and strength from each other, they return to their war-weary countries as advocates of grounded experiential pedagogy and as skilled ambassadors of peaceful resolutions to conflict, of equality and respect, and of the need to use their traumas in the service of transformation and human well-being.” Green believes that in our precarious era “our collective survival depends upon a significant portion of the human race accomplishing a change of worldview, from one of patriotic and tribal loyalties to loyalty to life itself” (E-mail to author, 16 September 2020).



Participatory Educational Methodology; Healing of Memories; Logotherapy

It is in such scenarios that the “Coalition for Work with Psychotrauma and Peace” employs a participatory educational methodology in order to empower traumatized people “to take control of their own lives.” This pedagogy and practice allows participants to use their experience and to work with their own issues in their own order and at their own pace. The curriculum includes a general introduction to working with people, self-care, interpersonal and group communication, psychology, and counseling, particularly as applied to the particular situations of the participants, non-violent conflict transformation, and human rights.

In general, groups last for about a year to a year and a half. They frequently also include therapy by another name, which destigmatizes the process. Still another advantage of this method is that people accept counseling better from their peers than from an outside source. This methodology also makes it easier to deal with cultural differences (Tauber, E-mail to author, 1 August 2020). Tauber refers to this methodology as “Pragmatic Empowerment Training.” He and his colleagues are motivated by their mission and conviction that the constituencies they work with—victims of sexual abuse, former child soldiers, war veterans, and other vulnerable groups—can be empowered to “take control of their lives through the development of new positive life values and perspectives,” as well as “re-integration into the community, particularly at the grassroots level” (www.cwwpp.org). They take particular cognizance

of the ease with which “people accept psychological assistance from members of their own groups rather than experts.”

In his conversation with Professor Spencer, Tauber underscored his sensitivity to the sensibilities of the traumatized groups he works with. He is cognizant of the challenges of undertaking groundbreaking work in a culture in which people don’t mention psychiatric ills without fear of being stigmatized. In order to create a safe space for victims of trauma to articulate their fears and inner demons without fear of being labeled “insane” or “incurably crazy,” Tauber and his colleagues train grassroots workers or “barefoot therapists” to facilitate “interpersonal and group communication” and “basic psychology and counseling” (*ibid.*). Such a culturally sensitive approach, tailored to the needs of a specific constituency, challenges the notion of “psychiatric universalism,” or humanitarian assistance in which mental health professionals and educators behave with condescension toward indigenous groups presenting to them “that there were different types of knowledge, and theirs was second-rate” (Summerfield 238). In an e-mail exchange with me, Tauber elucidated, “People previous psychological education but who are embedded in their communities are taught to become ‘barefoot therapists,’ also known as ‘peer supporters.’” Sometimes, he notes, “people on the ground have better insights than the rest of us” (1 August 2020). While politicians might not give any thought to the economic and emotional rehabilitation of such people, “barefoot therapists” recognize culturally-specific expressions and manifestations of grief and healing; lend them a sympathetic ear; teach them self-care; and boost their morale.

Tauber shared with me that beginning in 2020, members of the Coalition for Work with Psychotrauma and Peace worked with a group of volunteers from Turkey. They have also employed the methodology of Pragmatic Empowerment to train groups from Nigeria, Congo, and South Sudan, which comprise people who are learning about psychological supervision. Some of the individuals and groups these volunteers are asked to work with “have very high levels of psychological traumatization” from the atrocities that were inflicted on them or seemingly unsurpassable difficulties they faced “in their regions of origin and along their journeys, as well as through the administrative processes of seeking asylum.” As a result of the sharpened cognitive thinking and paradigm shifts that occurred because of this training in Congo, several people there are now striving for the incorporation of psychology into the structures of the schools and their communities. It might be difficult to judge the

immediate impact of such training on the ground, but the beneficiaries are people who would not get help otherwise.

Tauber emphasizes that the methodology of Pragmatic Empowerment Training supersedes the curriculum. In order to get optimum results, the size of the “educational or self-help group” is kept small. Several years of teaching in secondary and tertiary institutions have taught me that people have short attention spans. So I concur with Tauber’s emphasis on steering clear of long-winded sessions in order to get the unequivocal attention of the participants. Each session lasts for a maximum of “an hour and a half to two hours.” The success of this methodology is contingent on the heterogeneity of groups. “Even two groups in the same town with people of the same age and the same background will be different.” The issues that are discussed resonate with the participants, because they are relevant to their lives and have impacted, adversely or otherwise, their identity formation (*ibid.*; www.cwwpp.org). The goal of facilitating such discussions, I would observe, is to enable participants to retrieve their spiritual strength, confront their own histories, work through the paranoia that has debilitated them, and evaluate the morals, possibilities, allegiances or lack thereof, and issues of trust that determine their lives.

The encouragement of civil discourse and disagreeing with one another in a respectful environment requires “psychological supervision,” as does working with the personal issues of each of the participants and the collective issues of the group as a whole. “The role of the supervisor” in small group discussions/workshops “is not to criticize someone but to give new insights and angles” that might not have occurred to the discussants. In order to ensure transparency in supervisory work, it is necessary, Tauber insists, to hold “anyone working with other people at any level” accountable. It is imperative to hold not just “psychologists and psychiatrists” accountable, but “social workers, teachers, police, fire fighters and volunteers, however long-term or short-term their involvement is” as well (*ibid.*). All of them must be provided psychological supervision, not only to ensure accountability, but also to sensitize them to their own issues as well as the issues of the people with whom they are working. Psychological supervision, I note, would those working with people in various fields to practice better self-care as well. The repair of broken individuals and sociocultural fabrics is no mean task and, I would point out, cannot be accomplished without cultivating sensitivity to the cultural and religious sensibilities of traumatized groups and individuals.

I have often thought about how the resilience of families can enable them rebuild their lives? Betty J. Harris observes, “The family and community are key to collective grieving before moving forward with a well-thought-out political agenda for the long-term” (E-mail to author, 15 July 2020). The “peace-builders and therapists” I spoke with while working on my manuscript reinforced that an important aspect of their work was “to suggest mechanisms and facilitate processes that reinforce and empower resilience.” However, one cannot be Pollyannishly optimistic about the process of healing. Recalling his work with traumatized communities in Croatia, Serbia, and Bosnia, Tauber remarks that “it is important that the negative aspects of the trauma not be forgotten in this process, which is what happens often when some authors speak of ‘resilience’ or ‘positive psychology.’” He worked with Bosnians, Serbs, and Croats in a fragmented community on the Croatian-Bosnian border in 1999–2000. The three ethnic groups, which that community comprised, had by then become zealously protective of their exclusionary identities. No one had been spared the damage wreaked by the horrendous violence that was unleashed in the territory to which both the Bosniak/Croat and Serb parties/contingents laid claim. After having worked with the multiethnic community in a zone of contention for a couple of years, Tauber tells me, each side asked him to facilitate arbitration between the contentious ethnic groups in order to build symbolic bridges across the checkpoints and observation points that had been installed to entrench lines of separation. Tauber candidly admits that the only reason he was able to facilitate dialogue between the three groups, which were separated by forces of acrimony, rancor, and vengeance was because he was a third-party arbitrator. He does not, by any means, claim that his arbitration between the Bosniak, Croat, and Serb communities at that focal point of tension helped every ethnic group keep its head above water and become more inclusive. The machinations of electoral politics did not end either. But talking to one another enabled the three groups to achieve a breakthrough, giving them a vantage point from which they could envision constructive reforms and a multicultural identity (E-mail to author, 13 August 2020). A well-informed conclusion that I have come to is that educators can play an indispensable role in creating opportunities for meaningful communication between students and their families. The creation and growth of such opportunities for students enable them to weave their family life contexts into their personal, intellectual, and professional development (Lin et al. 196).

The import of skills necessary for graduating from simply highlighting problems and holding rigid positions to solving problems, for which flexibility and accommodating multiple points of view are necessary, was brought home to me while teaching my students at Rose State College and Oklahoma City Community College to make Rogerian arguments. As an educator, an Oklahoma Humanities Scholar, and a member of the Oklahoma Governor's International Team, I was keen on exploring pedagogical methodologies that would increase the exposure of students in Oklahoma to global political, economic, sociocultural, and gender issues. That's the reason I jumped at the opportunity to teach at two-year colleges for a couple of years, which gave me a chance to work with a constituency to which I had hitherto been unexposed. Several of my students came from challenging backgrounds. They had either experienced traumatic events, or witnessed abuse, or been victims of abuse. Some of them had substance-related disorders, which were complicated by comorbidities. One of the significant constituencies in my classes was that of veterans: students who had been deployed to war zones like Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, etc., and suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder because of having witnessed deliberate acts of violence. Learning about the Rogerian method of argumentation and employing it in their writings enabled the students to recognize that sound arguments were not about grandstanding, one-upmanship, or disseminating simplistic propaganda. On the contrary, making logical arguments in order to resolve problems made it necessary to listen to opposing points of view, acknowledge their validity, and then build common ground to accommodate multiple points of view. Students learned the difficult lesson that resolving a problem entailed negotiating with opposing sides to avoid alienating them, which could be successfully accomplished only by respectful discourse.

Every semester, I would encourage students to take positions on topical issues that they hadn't considered up until then. Those experiences give students "a new attitude to political discussion." They learn to "respect the opposing position and to be curious about the arguments on both sides, rather than seeing the discussion as simply a way of making boasts and assertions" (*ibid.*, 292). It also gave them an opportunity to step outside their comfort zones and perceive the global impact of some of these issues. I recall a couple of my students, who were veterans, arguing against militarization, although they were invested in it. Making rogerian arguments, which were persuasive and propounded

viable solutions, enabled students to cultivate the ability to place themselves in the shoes of the other person and to perceive the world through a lens different from their own. A rich imagination enables one “to achieve a kind of insight into the experience of another group or person that is very difficult to attain in daily life,” particularly in a world that is pervaded by a lack of understanding of each other and a paranoia that may lead to violence (*ibid.*, 294). I saw students mellow down, become less belligerent, more conciliatory and willing to negotiate once they learned to recognize shades of grey, which had been suppressed by monolithic narratives that portrayed the world in terms of black and white. I witnessed the students evolve as problem solvers who recognized that building bridges in an increasingly polarized world necessitated respectful discussions.

A course in which I observe an astounding transformation was the Women’s and Gender Studies course on “Women in the Muslim World” that I taught at the University of Oklahoma. The course focused on Muslim women, examining their position in and contribution to many Islamic societies, past and present. One of the central questions of the course was to understand how gender is constructed, entrenched, and transformed into Islamic societies. Prior to taking that course, most of my students had stereotypical notions of Islam and Muslim women. But our discussions and debates gave them a chance to interrogate commonly held beliefs about how Islam regards Muslim women and understand the heterogeneity within Islam. They acknowledged that it was fallacious to homogenize one-sixth of the world’s population, which identifies as Muslim. They observe that women in Muslim countries are positioned in relation to their own class and cultural identities; their own histories; their sensitivity to the diversity of cultural traditions and to the questions and conflicts within them; their own relations to the West; their interpretations of religious law; and their concepts of the role of women in contemporary society. Through critical thinking, stretching the imagination, and creative understanding, students discerned the line of demarcation between culture and religion. Often, empirical research conflates regressive cultural traditions with religious epistemologies, thereby perpetuating misunderstandings about some religious groups. Students developed a more nuanced understanding of gender ideologies in Muslim societies, which, similar to gender ideologies in Western societies, are not impenetrable, nor are they set in stone. In challenging simplistic concepts

of culture and religion, they perceived cultural values as capricious and subject to personal discretion.

For instance, the critical scrutiny of materials and well-moderated discussions enabled students to understand that the brutal practice of female genital mutilation was not sanctioned by Islam. This practice precedes Islam in countries in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East, where it is an entrenched cultural practice. Students also learned that while several countries have passed legislations to ban this practice, it hasn't been eradicated, because legislations don't change cultural mind-sets overnight. I was gratified by the analogous reasoning of the students which manifested in complex debates generated in class about the suppression of female autonomy and lack of reproductive justice in the West in the twenty-first century. Students veered away from the facile demonization of one religious community to drawing complex analogies between devices and practices in medieval Europe, predominantly Muslim countries in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, and the United States that were designed to uphold monolithic notions of femininity and criminalize female sexuality. In order to take students' experiences into account, the then-program of Women's and Gender Studies at the University of Oklahoma conducted an exit survey. The feedback that my students' provided was incredibly encouraging: They unanimously acknowledged that the course on "Women in the Muslim World" had been a transformative experience for them.

As I've said before, my education has taught me that there are no value-free judgments. Historical and political judgments, inevitably, get distorted by an inability to recognize the biases that result from one's own location in time and space (Allen 96). My training as a postcolonialist leads me to question the infallibility of an "objective" opinion, particularly in a war-torn area or conflict zone. Tauber's referencing of "chosen trauma" suggested that my skepticism about the "objectivity" of an opinion wasn't unfounded. In elucidating his point further, he observes that his city of adoption in eastern Croatia, Vukovar, has an 8000-year-old history, which has been whittled down in the popular narrative to the Croatian War of Independence, fought from 1991 to 1995 between Croat forces and the Serb-controlled Yugoslav People's Army as well as local Serb forces within that army.

He notes that politicians employ war trauma to manipulate their constituents, so they can recruit vulnerable people to bolster their own political dominance. He suggested that in the process traumas remained

untreated and unresolved. Tauber could not emphasize enough the danger in taking the bull by the horns to address trauma. Tauber reminds us about damage, which is irreparable in some cases, wrought by “unresolved psychological traumas as well as unresolved negative narratives.” I was reminded of psychiatrist Vamik Volkan’s elucidation of the psychological mechanism observed in perpetrators and victims of traumatic events to take refuge in silence. Volkan writes about this phenomenon in the context of the Holocaust. He recounts his meeting with Liliane Opher-Cohn, a Jewish-German child psychotherapist. He delineates her frame of reference by telling the reader that:

Her parents were survivors of the Holocaust, and she was preoccupied with what it meant to be Jewish. We spoke about the Third Reich-related issues appearing in patients’ sessions in Germany. She told me that these issues were not likely to surface in the official world of psychotherapy and that there was still a “silence” around this topic.

In a sense it was incorrect to refer to a silence concerning the Holocaust in Germany. After all, the German government has repeatedly acknowledged the crimes of the Nazis in the form of financial compensation, and publications, monuments, and artistic works have anatomized the period of the Third Reich. ... But rather than this kind of public declaration, Liliane Opher-Cohn and I were speaking of another kind of silence: the use of psychological mechanisms—ranging from intellectualization and denial to splitting and dissociation—that protect self-esteem by establishing emotional distance from aspects of the Holocaust and its transgenerational intrapsychic ramifications. (*Nazi Legacy* 4–5)

In their work with former soldiers, women, migrants, and youth in eastern Croatia, Serbia, northern Bosnia, Herzegovina, Congo, South Sudan, Nigeria, Germany, and Greece. Dr. Tauber and his associates also discovered that trauma is transmitted transgenerationally when younger generations imbibe the same sense of grievance that their parents, teachers, and politicians have been nursing. Hashimoto draws a similar inference in his work on cultural trauma in Japan: “... for the most part,” “Japanese postwar generations” “inherited ... the memory of the preceding generations” about the Asia-Pacific war “as part of their family history” (37). Trauma brought on by memories of political turmoil, military brutality, and fear psychosis created by such happenings can have dire effects. Tauber points out, “We see that there is a great lack of capacity to deal with such trauma. According to articles published in *The Lancet*

in September 2007 with data reaffirmed in late 2018, more than 90% people needing assistance with such trauma aren't getting it" (E-mail to author, 1 August 2020). There are people who do not have recourse to judicial and administrative machineries to seek restorative justice. The complexity of the task is exacerbated in a society that is split asunder by competing discourses of nationalism. In such multilayered and complex conflictual situations, can diverse groups be brought to the table to consider reconciliation as a viable alternative?

In the context of Jammu and Kashmir, for instance, Indian nationalists are quick to claim their intractable hold on Kashmiris; Pakistani nationalists are just as quick to claim to speak for Kashmiris. As I've said elsewhere, Kashmir, despite having a real internal history and a place in the world, is suppressed by its positioning in the Indo-Pak conflict. Mainstream Kashmiri politicians culpably reiterate that "Kashmir is an integral part of India," in the process of negating the people's voices and real existence. Separatists are just as quick to scrap that assertion with their vociferous calls for strikes and lockouts, in the process sidelining the educational and psychological needs of the younger generation. New Delhi in its signature style is straddling the fence by underlining the need for "dialogue" and "quiet diplomacy" but not taking any substantive measures to bring all stakeholders to the table. In such a murky situation, I would suggest that children of military/paramilitary personnel and children of militants sought to empower themselves by portraying their fathers and mothers as hapless, ingenuous, and powerless ("Discourse of Nationalisms in South Asia").

Tauber proposes, in response to my focus on Kashmir, that "Coalition for Work with Psychotrauma and Peace":

start with training pilot groups of trainers in Kashmir. In the first groups, the demography would be diverse so that people could return to their own groups and work with them and so that we could get to know the issues of various types of people.

As indicated above, initial training would be online for about an hour and a half per week in groups of 3-10 people. The first group(s) also would allow us to get to know Kashmiri culture and the issues that are most important. It is important that we work with people who are working in the field so as to get as close to the source as possible. (E-mail to author, 1 August 2020)

My interactions with students in rural colleges and rural university campuses have reinforced my notion that with empowerment at the grass-roots level, Kashmiris trained in “interpersonal and group communication” as well as “basic psychology and counseling” can give the clarion call for a much needed social consciousness; for a society that destigmatizes psychological ailments, thereby transmogrifying feelings of passivity into assertion and exercising choice.

The Institute for Healing Memories, which was founded by Father Michael Lapsley in South Africa in 1998, does similar work to break “the cycle of dehumanization, by which victims frequently become victimizers”; heal to restore “an enduring dignity, purpose and hope to marginalized individuals and communities”; and empower in order to make “new pathways possible by equipping individuals with the emotional tools to retake charge of their own lives.” The Institute for Healing Memories delineates its mission, which is to remember “the past injustices—ancient, old, and recent,” and heal “our multiple woundedness”; redeem “the past through prevention, empowerment and rehabilitation/healing by celebrating that which is life giving and laying to rest that which is destructive; and collaborate with those “who share our vision.” Father Lapsley developed the methodology that is employed at the Institute and in workshops facilitated by his dedicated team while working at the Trauma Center for Victims of Violence and Torture in Cape Town, which worked in tandem with the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission chaired by Nobel Laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Since then, Lapsley continues to facilitate workshops that are designed to encourage enduring healing, individually as well as collectively, so a future of co-existence can be envisioned (<https://www.healing-memories.org/about/about.html>).

I first met Father Lapsley at the Fairview Missionary Baptist Church, Oklahoma City, on October 21, 2019. The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma’s Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher Center for Social Justice and Racial Healing presented the event as part of an ongoing attempt to decrease polarization and bridge divides caused by systemic discrimination and deeply entrenched socioeconomic divides in Oklahoma. Lapsley gave an inspirational and motivating talk on “forgiveness and healing” that evening, which several friends of mine and I attended. I was intrigued by the stories that my friends had told me about his poignant and impactful journey. Father Lapsley spent a great part of his life combating apartheid and the “machinery of death of the apartheid state.” In 1990, three

months after anti-apartheid revolutionary and political leader Nelson Mandela was released from prison, an extremist group sent a letter bomb, carefully placed between the pages of a religious magazine, to him in Zimbabwe. Although he survived the bombing, he lost both hands and an eye as a result of the horrific and ghastly blast. One can't even begin to imagine how traumatic it must have been for him to lose both hands and an eye, but Lapsley's story is "one of resilience, not of defeat." His unmitigated commitment to the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa, and his indefatigable crusade against the forces of antipathy, enmity, and bigotry made a restorative impact on me and motivated me to get out of the funk I was in that evening. He had effectively transformed his trauma, recovered his agential capacities, and gone on to lead a "fulfilling" life, not as an invalid but as a whole person, to work toward building a new society on the edifice of transformative justice.

That evening I was particularly distraught because of the grim situation in Kashmir. The autonomous status of Kashmir had been revoked two months before I met Lapsley, and eight million people continued to remain cut off from the world, including some members of my family. At the time, Internet connectivity hadn't been restored in the Valley, and it was hard to come by authentic information about the gravity of the situation there. I was becoming increasingly cynical and was emotionally fatigued because of the political paralysis in that region. During the question and answer session, I admitted to having a sense of defeat given the dreadful lack of civil rights in Kashmir. I asked him how one could entertain the thought of forging dialogue across enemy lines in the oppressive environment of Kashmir. He replied that when Nelson Mandela was released from prison he chose to disavow bitterness, rage, and the desire for revenge, because he was cognizant that if he remained embittered and declared war on the apartheid regime, thousands of his supporters would be massacred. Instead, he opted to engage in dialogue with those who had incarcerated him for twenty-seven years. Lapsley expressed his solidarity with the people of Kashmir and reminded me to retain my sense of agency by acknowledging by showing solidarity with my people and acknowledging their stories.

In an e-mail exchange that he and I had a few months later, Lapsley emphasized that while "a key part of identity is knowing where we come from and the riches of our past, the problem is when the stories that are told from the past are filled with poisonous feelings like hatred and bitterness, which then distort the perceptions of the younger generation and

keep conflict going for hundreds of years.” But good memories, which erase hostility, aversion, and hate, get ruthlessly trampled upon by both victims and victimizers in conflict zones. In response to my question about the importance of keeping good memories of a bygone era alive in a war-torn zone, Lapsley responded that his notion of the “healing of memories is about the journey of acknowledging and beginning to let go of those things in the past that would destroy us” and retrieving from the past that “which is like giving, i.e., the good memories.” He admitted that my question on how we could encourage young people to channelize their anger and take the political process forward with being manipulated by vested interests was a “challenging” one. “Young people,” Lapsley observes, would be inspired by “older role models who had dealt” with their trauma and were “able to project a vision of a different kind of world.” He notes that the “one thing” he had learned in the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa was “how important it is to ask not simply what are we against, but also what we are for” (E-mail to author, 17 August 2020). This response resonated with me, because in my writings on Jammu and Kashmir, I have reiterated that a political movement that pays insufficient attention to the welfare of the populace, good governance, and rebuilding democratic institutions ends up leaving irreparable destruction in its wake. Some political and militant nationalist movements in Kashmir make the grave error of turning a blind eye to the vitriol of corruption and inefficiency in the administrative setup and educational institutions, because there is still a sense of ambiguity about what they stand for.

“Everybody is affected by context,” just as everyone in South Africa was impacted by its past, “but not everybody,” Lapsley said with conviction, “has to be a prisoner of it. “Real leaders,” unlike the politicians we see in several parts of the world, “are those who have dealt with their own demons or are in the process of doing so” (*ibid.*). As I’ve said on several platforms, real leaders do not want their people to wallow in grief for eternity, nor do they build their castles on the agonies of those who have suffered tremendous losses. I would echo Lapsley by reiterating that national identity cannot be rebuilt on unquenchable hate for opposing forces and certainly not on cashing in on the pain and grief of one’s own people. In seeking larger political goals, like the right of self-determination, we ignore the mental and emotional health of the people for whom, supposedly, the goal is being sought. I would argue that even if colonialism and neocolonialism come to an end, those who bear the

scars of the ineluctable cruelties of those phenomena will not be able to “lead free, fulfilling, and whole lives,” unless we “learn about trauma at a cerebral level.” It is then, Lapsley notes, that it can “have the potential of leading to introspection, which could help bring about change.” We might not always be “aware of the degree of woundedness that we have inherited. But once there is that Awakening,” and we come out of denial to take cognizance of how “damaged” we are, “that creates the possibility of healing” (ibid.).

In keeping with the mission of the Institute for Healing of Memories, Lapsley travels the world to work with communities that have endured systemic discrimination, unspeakable brutalities, and dehumanizing marginalization to facilitate individual healing, engage in social justice work, and enable traumatized individuals to find their power by recovering their agency. He tells me that whenever he goes to a country for the first time, he often asks the following questions: “What are the areas of silence? What are the things that cannot be spoken about?” The answers to those questions often reveal “the deepest wounds.” And that is the reason, he reminds us, “it is important to create safe spaces where the silence can be broken in healthy ways” (ibid.). Within communities, “there’s always a space for initiatives” particularly from those who are considered credible and “have standing.” Such people “can then, sometimes, say tough things within a community with humility, not claiming to have all the answers.” In order to pave the way for the healing of trauma, education can have an impact in breaking walls of silence in the larger community, if “we think of education not as simply cerebral, but involving us as human beings in a holistic way including the emotional, psychological, and spiritual” (ibid.). I have been cognizant of the healing power of telling one’s own story as well as the world of difference it can make in the life of the person whose story is acknowledged.

A couple of weeks ago, I was approached by my friends, Joan and Mike Korenblit, founders of the Respect Diversity Foundation, about the virtual conference on “Race and Racism” which they are organizing with Dr. Tonnia Anderson from the Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher Center for Social Justice and Racial Healing “(and a committee of social justice advocates from various parts of the country).” The Institute for the Healing of Memories will collaborate with them to further this project, which makes it all the more appealing to me. The Korenblits shared with me that they would be “inviting educators and activists to facilitate the workshops. This virtual conference would be used for professional training for

teachers and other adults.” The virtual conference is entitled “Building Bridges/Dismantling Racism for the Common Good.” I have agreed to be a facilitator for one of the modules at the conference. Subsequently, Dr. Anderson shared the intention of the conference with me, which I am reproducing verbatim:

First, some personal thoughts for us to consider. For many years I thought that I understood Audre Lorde’s statement that the “master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house.” Over the years, I have considered this powerful statement from a variety of theoretical vantage points: from the Afrocentric perspectives of Garvey, Malcolm X, the Black Panther Party, and Asante as well as from other intellectuals like DuBois, King, Morrison, West, and hooks. Finally, the power and significance of Lorde’s statement dawned on me—a statement which has relevance to our project—racism cannot be effectively tackled by focusing only on the symptoms of racism. It has to be exposed and to do that “whiteness” has to be exposed for what it is. When looking at systemic racism, the focus has been on the symptoms of the disease such as high incarceration rates, poor educational achievement, poverty, mortality rates, family structure, etc. Going back to the Moynihan Report and even further back, the symptoms of systemic racism have been framed as “black problems,” which have ultimately reinforced the idea of black inferiority and all of the stereotypes go along with it. I can say the same thing about how Native American issues have been framed. Symptoms have been examined and studied for much longer than I have been on this earth. While these things are real problems within communities of color, they are but by-products of systemic racism. Unfortunately, too little attention is given to the actual disease.

The “tap root” of racism *is* “whiteness”—a social construction based upon the ideology of white supremacy and the practice of “Othering.” Of course this social construction has matured over the centuries into an invisible norm strengthened by every type of social and cultural institution within American society. All people within the United States have been assimilated through its institutions to believe in the normalcy of whiteness, whether they ultimately reject it or not. Acceptance of whiteness is presented as an essential key to success, regardless of race, and if one is not successful, it stands as a testament to the litany of stereotypes that signify racial deficiencies. (This point even applies to Euro-Americans who “don’t measure up,” hence the historical legacy of racial integrity laws that existed in the South.) But even success for racial minorities can be a slippery slope where they have to be mindful of stepping out of their place and intruding too deeply into “White Only Spaces.” W.E.B. DuBois understood this quite well.

Within the United States, we as a collective generally do not refer to ourselves as Americans, but self-identify through the social constructions of race. We are white, black, Indian (indigenous people)—and all of these things are social constructions used to stratify humanity. I was reminded yesterday (October 21, 2019) of a poignant statement made by Father Michael Lapsley at Fairview Missionary Baptist Church in OKC. He recalled being placed in South Africa and described how that racist system attempted to transform him from being a man—a human being—and into a white man or a social construct. African American WWI veterans experienced a similar transformation overseas, but in reverse. The lack of human dignity experienced in the US was transformed into dignity and respect as American soldiers in France. But for most of us we unconsciously wear the clothing of racialized social constructions.

From my perspective, the objective of putting together a professional development workshop-hybrid on race and racism is to help people understand how “whiteness” shapes and distorts our society. Without understanding how “whiteness” works, it is impossible to understand racism and how it is grafted into American institutions and how it shapes race relations. Without understanding “whiteness,” we only focus on the symptoms. (E-mail to author, 15 August 2020)

Anderson believes that the Black Lives Matter movement is the outcome of younger generations learning to channelize their anger, sense of alienation, and taking the political process forward without playing into anyone’s hands. She reminds us that constructive opposition to gun violence has been led by youth in recent years; young people have demonstrated to increase environmental awareness. The youth, she underlines, needs to “understand the histories of the subjects being tackled; they need to connect and recognize (as many do) the strength of their own power.” Family and community support endow young people with the soundness and robustness that require to take collective action, and that concerted effort and “collective action provides a venue to channel, process, and potentially redress exploitation” (E-mail to author, 4 September 2020).

I have always strongly believed that families can play an indispensable role in helping people to recover from traumatic experiences, particularly in conflict zones like Kashmir where homes and communities have been destroyed, family is the most important remaining social institution. Nancy J. Lin et al. in their exhaustive work on “Education as Catalyst for Intergenerational Refugee Family Communication About War and Trauma” remind us:

Silence in society about trauma has consequences on multiple levels for individuals, families, and communities. Yet educators must realize that although the systemic marginalization and misrepresentation of relevant content in both the school curriculum and the popular culture perpetuate silence ..., community themselves may also perpetuate dynamics of silence among themselves and even across generations. (198)

For those who have undergone trauma due to political, cultural, or socioeconomic reasons, the shroud of silence gives them the time, space, energy to reflect on and process traumatizing experiences. There is also an underlying fear of the revelation of truth causing the stigmatization of individuals/families, which is why those involved in a conflict as either perpetrators, or victims, or silent witnesses are loathed to divulge information.

Education that aids in articulating traumatic experiences and integrating such experiences for young people who have intimate knowledge of familial trauma can enable educators to facilitate the education of students in order to positively impact “all students’ empathy, understanding, and resulting ability to understand individuals, families, and communities who have experienced trauma.” Empathy, I would emphasize, is not an end in and of itself. While it is “one component of a larger constellation of forces of factors in both historical and sociopolitical action,” its importance in revivifying restorative justice cannot be underestimated (LaCapra, *History and Its Limits* 67). Professor Paul Mojzes, who has already been introduced to the reader, authored *Yugoslavian Inferno: Ethnoreligious Warfare in the Balkans*, *Religious Liberty in Eastern Europe and the USSR*, and editor of *Religion and War in Bosnia*. From his research on disintegration, ethnic cleansing, and seeming irredeemable destruction in the Balkans, Mojzes emphatically said:

It is important to look forward rather than backward. The trauma already happened (sometimes for centuries) and it is important not to dwell on it but to dedicate oneself to a “better future.” Young people are willing to sacrifice themselves on behalf of an inspiring goal which is associated with large aims, such as liberty, participatory democracy, opportunity for advancement, change, equality, human rights, racial, ethnic and gender equality etc., but then specify achievable realistic first steps and feel empowered when these are achieved. (E-mail to author, 17 July 2020)

Through my interaction with idealistic students, I have found that, often-times, they are drawn to lofty ideals, abstract concepts, and utopian worlds without recognizing that societies and nations are built brick by brick. One's resolve can be strengthened and one's confidence bolstered if the first steps are clearly defined and achievable.

It is therapeutic for the younger generation to engage with the past and to learn about historical, political, and sociocultural legacies through a larger context that enables them to connect with sociocultural identity, family/tribe/clan, and society. Sometimes, "the taboo nature of knowledge of the traumatic past" makes it "even more salient" in the lives of the younger generation "than it normally would be; the fact that parents" tend "to hide a great deal from them" amplifies "their affective charge." The younger generation resorts to blocking out the mangled "past, refusing to linger on painful memories" (Stein 11). But personal memories must not be bogged down by social silence about traumatic events and political terrors. Nor should those personal memories be allowed to fester and become rancid. Fanon poignantly expressed the burden that the black race bore of "tons of chains" and "storms of blows," despite which he believed he did "not have the right to allow himself to bog down," or allow himself "to be mired in what the past." In actively seeking to end "the enslavement of man by man," he chose to not be "the slave of the Slavery" that had "dehumanized" his "ancestors" (230–231).

Reminiscing about the trauma that his family was afflicted by, Mojzes offers wise counsel:

In the case of my family, my father and his entire family were killed in the Holocaust and so were some members of my mother's ethnically different family, including my sister. Yet my mother's faith in God channeled her as a widow to raise my younger brother and me without burdening us with hate toward the perpetrators. It's very, very crucial to avoid hatred and the desire for revenge. Justice consists of working toward a kind of society that is opposite from the type that the perpetrators attempted to build. (E-mail to author, 17 July 2020)

Educators can facilitate the process of healing for young people by encouraging a comprehensive study of contemporary history in which students are stakeholders.

Recalling his upbringing in the war-torn Balkans, Paul Mojzes reinforced my observation.

Often dictatorial regimes and historical precedent result in passivity. People ask “how do I survive” these bad times? The answer is lay low—if you raise your head, you’ll have your head chopped off. This is not an unreasonable response in many societies. The United States is currently blessed by its long democratic experience, so many people are not silent in the face of Trump’s outrages. But in the Balkans, where I used to live, we had this “culture of silence” for centuries. The problem is that resentment builds and then it explodes in incredible and indiscriminate blood-letting. That, sometimes, leads to a “cult of personality” where politics assumes a religious dimension (E-mail to author, 17 July 2020).

Psychologist Bruno Bettelheim found problematic the identification of agential capacities of survivors. Similar to Mojzes, he too suggested that often “laying low” and remaining passive enabled survival. I’ve said this on other platforms, and I reiterate that I cannot emphasize enough the need to create access for marginalized peoples to a community perspective, or a reference group. Avenues for rehabilitation must be created, so those who have been brutalized can work through the discourse of oppression and victimhood into developing the construction of their identities as survivors.

Given the complex negotiations that are required to fend off discriminatory policies in quasi-democratic regions, Professor Harris asserted that it would be simplistic to assume that a “culture of silence” was synonymous with complicity. On the contrary, she points out:

Having lived in southern Africa during the apartheid era, prior to the 1990s, few people of color dared to publicly challenge the very rigid and entrenched apartheid system. They planned their dissent in remote spaces out of earshot of spies and intelligence agencies, they met with exiles and political dissidents, and they executed a variety of “actions” in public. The element of surprise was very important. All of these activities were planned under the “veil of silence” (E-mail to author, 15 July 2020). However, when silence represents complicity, “I think that the community is vulnerable to encapsulation, imprisonment, and even greater oppression. One cannot afford to be silent”. (ibid.)

In keeping with my sustained attempt to build bridges across religious and culture divides, and to form consensus on effective strategies for youth empowerment, I also communicated with Dr. Leonard Swidler, Professor of Catholic Thought and Interreligious Dialogue at Temple University. He founded the Dialogue Institute in 1978. In discussing

the devastation wreaked by violence and deploying education as an inter-religious tool in intergenerational family communication, Dr. Swidler remarked:

I lost half of my family amidst butchery of tens of millions of Ukrainians in 1932-33 by Joseph Stalin. Mao Tse Tung starved 80 million of his own people to death—resistance was suicidal. There is much structural evil in the U.S. However, different than countries like Adolf Hitler's Germany, Joseph Stalin's Russia, and Mao Tse Tung's China, the USA has made substantial progress, and vastly more can be accomplished if the non-violent struggle is constantly pursued.

I taught at Duquesne University, Pittsburgh 1961-1966 and Temple University 1966—now. My colleagues' and my efforts during those "revolutionary" times were largely positive and successful in channeling the students' energies in positive directions.

Mainly the Liberal Arts faculties are best equipped to provide leadership. The other faculties need to support the effort as much as possible, but one cannot look for major leadership from them.

In healing a culture of silence in a conflict zone, Dr. Martin Luther King's Passive-Resistance can be effective in democratic countries—but not in totalitarian countries. (E-mail to author, 25 June 2020)

As educators, we are in a position to mold students not just intellectually, but as functional members of families and communities as well. Deploying pedagogical tools as catalysts for verbalizing sociocultural trauma gives students a meaningful voice in addition to contributing to family and community healing.

In my conversation with Professor Betty J. Harris, she points out that her work in southern Africa in the apartheid era had taught her that "obsession with trauma may lead to paralysis and hopelessness." The ravages of conflict can brutalize societies beyond recognition, but "one should not lose sight of basic humanitarian principles and seek to establish those principles as norms in one's society in forging ahead. In other words, trauma has to be turned into a positive experience that confronts and overcomes systemic oppression(s)" (E-mail to author, 15 July 2020). It is important to note, however, that mental and emotional dimensions cannot be severed from also linked to the physical, social, and spiritual dimensions. South Africa, Kanda points out, "is an illustration of intergenerational trauma."

Violence between different communities that was committed centuries ago affects today's generations. Physical conditions such as HIV/AIDS, behavioral problems such as addiction, and mental conditions such as depression in South Africa are in part a legacy of violence and inequality transmitted from one generation to the other. For example, conditions observed in some South African communities such as spirit possession or witchcraft are dissociative or conversion disorders resulting from transgenerational trauma. (Kanda, e-mail to author, 9 July 2020)

I wondered if the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), which began hearings in 1996 on a wide range of atrocities inflicted on South African citizens during the apartheid era had efficaciously implemented restorative justice as opposed to retributive justice or by individualizing the victims of apartheid, had “the TRC failed to adequately address the injustices of apartheid as a legalized system of oppression which had blighted the lives of many millions of South Africans”? (Craps 45).

Nobel Laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu, chair of the TRC, had in his foreword to the TRC's final report recommended that subsequent to victims recounting the brutal atrocities inflicted on them, perpetrators asking forgiveness, and victims granting it, they could “close the chapter on our past,” and “move into the glorious future of a new kind of society” (vol. 1, ch. 1, par. 91, 93). But did that, indeed, alleviate the sufferings of the traumatized?

Harris responded to my query by recounting her experience at a TRC hearing in 1997:

The TRC, which conducted 1003 hearings from 1996-1998 was headed by Archbishop Desmond Tutu. In 1997, I attended a hearing on the Heidelberg Tavern Massacre that had occurred at a restaurant/bar, frequented by University of Cape Town students, on New Year's Eve in 1993. The massacre was committed by the Azanian People's Liberation Army, which comprised Pan-Africanist Congress guerillas. Two female students and a restaurant employee were killed. Also, the boyfriend of one of the students was shot in the back at point-blank range and rendered a paraplegic. The massacre occurred more than two years after the African National Congress (ANC) had agreed, in the negotiation process with the apartheid government, to end the armed struggle. Subsequently, survivors, family members, and the three perpetrators of the massacre were present at the hearing in 1997, with legal representation. Mothers of both the young women who had been killed, one of whom was white and the other colored, testified about the impact of the massacre on their lives. The disabled boyfriend

and the brother of the slain employee, both young white men, testified as well. While the mother of the white girl who had been killed advocated for the exoneration of the three accused guerillas, the two white males advocated for their imprisonment. Subsequent to recommendations having been made by the paraplegic young man and the relatives of those who were massacred, evidence collected over several days was turned over to the TRC. The commission would make a determination as to the fate of the perpetrators and any compensation to victims and their family members.

The mother of the slain white female student, Ginn Fourie, would tour South Africa with Letlapa Mphahlele, former commander of Azanian People's Liberation Army to disseminate the Christine doctrine of forgiveness. While deliberations were taking place, there was substantial discussion in the media about the emotional trauma of revisiting horrific events without the benefit of psychological counseling. Furthermore, the new South African government indicated that it had a limited budget to compensate victims and family members. (E-mail to author, 19 June 2020)

Truth and Reconciliation Commission was a mechanism that enabled South African citizens to address the atrocities of apartheid by allowing discussions to occur in extra-judiciary settings.

Anthropologist Allen Feldman observes that TRC hearings efficaciously restored the agential capacities of the traumatized and recognized them as political actors:

Many witnesses rejected the biographical nomination of "victim," with all the passive and depoliticizing connotations this term implies, choosing instead the term "survivors," which allows for a sense of political agency. Submitting testimony was not therefore seen as wounded persons showing their scars in public, but rather as an act of political and historical intervention: setting the record straight after the system of mendacity and disinformation of the former regime.

New relationships were forged in the process in order to aid the recovery of trauma victims. In the space created by and during TRC hearings, victims and perpetrators were required to listen to one another; confess to atrocities that they may have been complicit in and to ask for forgiveness and recognize the impact that the atrocities had on the lives of the victims and their families, and to consider some form of compensation. South Africans saw the full range of nefarious activities that the security apparatus was involved in. They also saw that liberation movements were

not excluded from the process of restorative justice. Even though liberation organizations were fighting apartheid, they had perpetrated human rights violations as well. TRC hearings ensured that trauma survivors, their families, and communities came to grips with the fuller impact of the atrocities on the people within the country, and to precipitate the process of national healing. Historian Dominick LaCapra suggested that the TRC “was in its own way a trauma recovery center” (*Writing History* 43). It was an educational process for people to learn the scope of the apartheid’s security apparatus, so it could be dismantled. It dawned on the citizenry that an ethical process has to emerge out of the TRC hearings that is utilized through the constitution and policymaking to build a new nation. Issues raised during these hearings have the potential to enable communities to determine what falls within the range of acceptable behavior and policymaking.

Several communities/families in conflict zones remain impacted by historical and politico-cultural trauma, making it difficult for the younger generation to break through the seemingly impregnable wall of silence with which their elders protect themselves. The younger generation walks on eggshells around their elders who have repressed traumatic memories, and might find itself complicit in maintaining a stoic silence about the sturm und drang and unredressed agonies of the past:

The younger generation is also a participant in maintaining silence, although perhaps a lesser partner. Familial trauma has multigenerational effects, perhaps particularly when it is sociocultural trauma that affects the entire community and the meaning of being a member of that community. ... But even when children of trauma survivors do not themselves develop trauma related symptoms, there are profound effects of the trauma and the silence surrounding it. These effects can contribute to the younger generation participating in maintaining silence. (Lin and Suyemoto 130)

This is where the role that educators can play in building frameworks to facilitate the verbalization of trauma and creation of coherent narratives becomes indispensable.

Here I concur with Nancy J. Lin et al.’s observation:

Respect for education presents an opportunity for educators to shift the systemic, cultural, and family dynamics that prevent discourse about ... genocide, hinder the healing process, and frustrate the younger generation from understanding what happened and how it affects them. (203)

Creating channels of communication that enable intergenerational as well as transgenerational communication, which is emotionally expressive, is bound to be cathartic, aid in the recovery of trust, and is likely to have a profound effect on survival, well-being, and success (Weine et al. 154).

Professor Mojzes, who, in addition to being an academic and author, has organized and participated in numerous interreligious dialogues, including many in the Republic of Macedonia underscores that:

intergenerational efforts can be bolstered through education in order to fix what is wrong and to correct the mistakes of the past. Sometimes older members of the family, not necessarily parents, but can be aunts and uncles can urge younger members of the family to joining them in addressing societal problems as well as bolstering family cohesion. Intra-family love is a very important ingredient for family cohesion and well-being. (E-mail to author, 17 July 2020)

Stevan Weine et al. observed about Bosnian refugees that the perception of family members regarding political violence is created through a family lens that family members tend to perceive the consequences of political violence through a family lens because of family and filial obligations being seen as the nexus of every social relationship in Bosnian culture: “Our impression was that for those who became refugees and whose homes and communities were destroyed, the family was the most important remaining social institution” (148).

I observe that it is quite the same in South Asian cultures. A strong belief among South Asians, particularly Kashmiris, is that families can play an indispensable role in helping people to recover from traumatic experiences. The ravages of conflict, displacement, dispossession, and political violence bring about large-scale changes within family structures are recognized by families as the wide range of changes, which are a part of refugee trauma (*ibid.*). Professor Paul Mojzes believes that:

it is important for young people not to fall prey to extremists on the right and on the left. Youth tend to be impulsive and impatient and yet they need to do the opposite, namely show persistence and patience. Work on constructive practical goals rather than on appealing but often mostly symbolical actions. Avoid being purist—work with all who are willing to cooperate so that diversity is maintained. Planning and organization is very important if long range progress is to be made. (E-mail to author, 17 July 2020)

While extremist ideologies of all hues might seem seductive, it is necessary for young people to steer clear of the glamor of the short-lived braggadocio of affiliating with power brokers on extreme opposites of the spectrum. Any ideology that demands uncritical adherence, solidity, and the dismissal of the multiplicity of perspectives is incapable of creating space for all stakeholders at the negotiating table. Such ideologies thrive on conflict, fractured identities, “chosen traumas,” and the glorification of victimhood. Nations are not built on the corpses of their young, nor are the edifices of selfhood raised on fractured kinship systems.



Finding Purpose and Meaning in the Sturm and Drang of the Unredressed Agonies of the Past

My interest in intergenerational trauma, resilience, and finding a sense of purpose led me to the work of Austrian psychiatrist and Holocaust survivor Viktor Frankl. I have been intrigued by Viktor Frankl's recapitulation of his brutal experiences in the concentration camps of Theresienstadt, Auschwitz, Kaufering, and Türkheim, and his groundbreaking analysis of how a sense of purpose and meaning gave the emasculated, decrepit, and denigrated inmates of those camps the will to survive. Frankl posited that people could overcome disproportionate sufferings and egregious violations of human rights with courage and dignity if she/he found something to live for. The invaluable insight he gained was that while external and threatening unwieldy forces might deprive one of everything that she/he owns and holds dear, one can retain the freedom to choose one's response to the situation, however adverse or life-threatening it might be. Frankl's concept of logotherapy is defined against the backdrop of the humiliations that he was subjected to at Auschwitz, where he and the surviving members of his family were sent in 1944. In a telephonic conversation, his pupil and now President of the International Board of Directors at the Viktor Frankl Institute of Logotherapy, Robert C. Barnes, explained that logotherapy is the only theory of psychology that has been validated in such intense environments as prison camps (25 August 2020). The despondency of a dehumanized existence in a concentration camp was overcome by Frankl by successfully

striving to “find a meaning” in his life, which, he claims, “is the primary motivational force in man” (178). His emphasis on a “will to meaning” as the “primary motivational force in man” supersedes the Freudian “will to pleasure” and Adlerian “will to power” (*ibid.*):

Logotherapy deviates from psychoanalysis in so far as it considers man a being whose main concern consists in fulfilling a meaning, rather than in the mere gratification and satisfaction of drives and instincts, or in merely reconciling the conflicting claims of id, ego and superego, or in the mere adaptation to society and environment. (*ibid.*, 186–187)

I have often found the relevance of Frankl’s perception manifests itself in my life and in situations of gloom and despondency. He poignantly recounts his experience of utter desperation and despair at a camp in Bavaria, where the thought of rewriting his confiscated manuscript and jotting down notes on fragmented pieces of paper infused new life into him. He asserts with clarity that the “tension between what” he had “already achieved and what” he “still ought to accomplish” kept his mental faculties alive and revived “his will to meaning,” preventing him from succumbing to the brutalizing forces of annihilation (*ibid.*, 189).

Although Frankl was a scientist, not a theologian, his theory parallels the most prominent faith traditions in the world (Barnes, telephonic conversation, 25 August 2020). Frankl lucidly states that a life that is “almost” devoid of opportunities to find gratification in “creative work” and satiation of the senses can still espouse “one possibility of high moral behavior,” which would be a person’s “attitude” to her/his conscripted “existence.” A life in which the person could indulge her/his creative urges might be denied to her/him by “external forces, but that is when a person finds meaning in “suffering/” “Suffering” is as inevitable as “fate and death.” A person has the potential to display fortitude, stoicism, and dignity in the face of suffering and adversity. The manner in which she/he chooses to bear her/his cross provides her/him “ample opportunity—even under the most difficult circumstances” to explore the unplumbed depths of her/his life. Or the person could sink to hitherto unknown levels of bestiality and savagery in “the bitter fight for self-preservation.” This is where the person makes the critical decision to either capitalize or renounce “the opportunities of attaining the moral values that a difficult condition” might offer. The crucial decision to either embrace her/his dignity or sink to the depths of barbarity “decides whether” the person

“is worthy” of her his “sufferings or not” (123–124). Frankl propounds that we can retain our agency even in the worst situations, enabling us to effectively transform trauma instead of transmitting it.

Unlike conventional psychotherapists, Frankl posits that the sharpness of one’s mental faculties and psychological health is contingent on “the striving and struggling for a worthwhile goal, a freely chosen task” (ibid.). He further observes that the “search for an abstract meaning of life” is fruitless and ineffective. On the contrary, everyone’s “unique” purpose in life is to fulfill a “concrete assignment” for the completion of which she/he is accountable. I am particularly drawn to the emphasis of logotherapy on “responsibleness,” which it sees as “the very essence of human existence” (ibid., 196–197). When a community has been denigrated by laws that legitimize horrors inflicted on it, and freedom from indignity and ignominy seems like a distant dream, finding meaning in life, despite the suffering, can remove the stigma of shame and self-degradation associated with suffering:

In accepting this challenge to suffer bravely, life has a meaning up to the last moment, and it retains this meaning literally to the end. In other words, life’s meaning is an unconditional one, for it even includes the potential meaning of unavoidable suffering. (Frankl 207)

We live in a day and age in which there seems to be an unbridgeable gulf between figures of authority and the electorate, who have been deployed as pawns in the devious political game being played by nation-states. Societies that are off-keel because of the ravages of war and conflict lack a well-equipped infrastructure, making unemployment rife and the educated segment of the population more or less redundant, as I point out in my book *Islam, Women, and Violence in Kashmir*. Militant nationalisms; crimes of aggression committed by states; crimes against humanity; violent conflict; and global instability have created abysmal conditions. In a world that is no longer recognizable, because traditions and customs that might have provided structure have been rendered defunct, “no instinct tells” an individual “what he ought to do.” The marginalization or criminalization of an individual’s culture in a majoritarian state or a totalitarian regime rips her/his kinship relationships and social fabric apart. In such situations, an individual “either wishes to do what other people do (conformism) or he does what other people wish him to do (totalitarianism)” (ibid., 192).

Is logotherapy an effective remedy for people adversely impacted by dangerous confrontations and conflictual situations? Can distraught and traumatized individuals be encouraged to answer for her/his own life? Can those who feel stripped of agency by factors outside their control be taught that they can only “respond” to life “by being responsible” (ibid., 197)? Can the agential capacities of survivors of community violence, sexual or physical abuse, early childhood trauma, domestic or family violence, and natural disasters be restored to where they can interpret their own life tasks as either “being responsible to society,” or to their “own conscience” (ibid., 198)?

Subsequently, I corresponded with Alphonse Kanda, who trained at the Viktor Frankl Institute of Logotherapy and now works as a Chief Medical Officer in community mental health at West Rand Health District and as a Logotherapy trainer at the University of South Africa and the Viktor Frankl Institute of Logotherapy, South Africa. I began by asking Kanda, in our zoom conversation and then via e-mail, what our younger generations in Jammu and Kashmir and other conflictual situations could do in order to channelize their anger and sense of alienation, and take the political process forward without playing into anyone’s hands, which is a concern of mine. Kanda stated, “From the logotherapy perspective, anger, which is a feeling often linked to aggression as a behavior, is one of the symptoms of existential vacuum resulting from existential frustration.” “Existential frustration,” he clarified, is “the frustration of the will to meaning which is considered the primary motivational factor for every human being.” Kanda corroborates his claim by quoting physicist and philosopher Danah Zohar and artist Ian Marshall, who in their book *Spiritual capital: Wealth We Can Live By* “propose that Abraham Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs should be reversed, so that the first need of self-actualization which is satisfied by attending to the will to meaning becomes the most important need” (17). He further notes that the other two symptoms of the *mass neurotic triad*, as Frankl delineated, include *depression* and *addiction* besides aggression. In his practice as chief medical officer in community health at West Rand Health District, Kanda has often observed that “depression and addiction occur concurrently with aggression” (E-mail to author, 10 August 2020). I consider it pertinent to elucidate that according to Frankl, “Existential frustration is in itself neither pathological nor pathogenic” (185). A person’s worry about her/his inability to decipher the meaning of her/his life and the apparent purposelessness of

her/his life is an existential distress, but not by any stretch of the imagination “a mental disease” (ibid.). He believes that logotherapy is applicable in rural Africa, because every client “has a life of meaning regardless of his or her cultural context. The sociocultural context is an environment within which clients live that provides them a medium for communication and ways of interacting with the world, but the beliefs and context of the client do not take away the meaning of calling of each moment in their lives” (“Argument for Logotherapy in Rural African Setting”).

As I mentioned earlier, I was troubled by gnawing feelings of alienation from mainstream society that I noticed in some of the students I met and spoke with in Kashmir. I articulated the concern generated by some of those interactions with Kanda. He responded:

Alienation is a feeling often resulting from a situation of isolation. It contributes to the frustration of the will to meaning by preventing meaningful relationships of the human being with his or her fellow human being and his or her world. Human beings are by definition relational beings always reaching out for other beings and their world.

If the anger of the young people can be viewed as a feeling that signals a frustration of the will to meaning, it can be seen as a call to assist young people to redirect their will to what is meaningful in their lives. What is meaningful always points to what is beautiful, good, and true. Such a direction toward meaning as the calling of each moment in life will allow young people to be creative and unique in their lives and not fall into either a conformist, or uniformist, or fanatical, or fatalist attitude (ibid.).

Underscoring the need to build communities of care and peace in conflict zones, Dr. Kanda observes that “communities that are overwhelmed by grief and outrage can provide a sounding board for their peoples, because meaning is conditional regardless of the intensity of pain and suffering.” He asserts that “grief with suffering presents community member opportunities to respond with care and love to prevent further suffering and grief.” In response to my question on whether a family that is riven apart by grief and outrage could provide a sounding board, Kanda quoted South African anti-apartheid activist Mamphela Ramphele and developmental psychologist Linda Richter, who in their chapter “Migrancy, Family Dissolution, and Fatherhood” in *Baba: Men and Fatherhood in South Africa* write, “Children and youth recognize the disruptions in their lives and understand how this affects their families.

They are clearly aware that it is not normal for parents to care little for one another or for their children” (80). That realization can provide inspiration for the revitalization of society, I would argue, and for the building of civil society organizations as well (E-mail to author, 10 August 2020).

In an entirely different context, an example of a community providing a sounding board in which bereaved individuals of diverse religious affiliations repudiate violence and lean on one another to facilitate healing is “the Parents Circle-Families Forum.” This forum was “started by a Palestinian father and an Israeli father who had each lost his young daughter to violence by members of the opposite ethnic/political entity.” Tabbernee, whom I referenced earlier, elaborates that “the two grief-stricken fathers and their families became sounding boards for each other and eventually broadened the circle to include dozens of more families in a similar position.” The vision of the Parents Circle-Families Forum, which was founded by Mr. Yitzhak Frankenthal and a handful of Israeli families in 1995, is to “create a framework” for building camaraderie between seemingly irreconcilable individuals/parties. This joint Palestinian-Israeli organization is cognizant that “sustainable peace” cannot be achieved without accommodating multiple points of view and pursuing the “process of reconciliation” (https://www.theparentscircle.org/en/about_eng/).

The vision of this organization is to build common ground between two forces that have been sworn enemies for decades. They strive to influence members of the civil society, policymakers, and decision makers to peacefully resolve the conflict and “achieve a just settlement based on empathy and understanding.” The members of this organization have lost their loved ones to the brutal and interminable conflict in the region. Despite their ongoing bereavement, or because of it, they have garnered the strength to vocally oppose “the Occupation” and remain firm in their conviction that in order to achieve “sustainable” and long-lasting peace in a volatile political climate, “historical reconciliation between the nations” must necessarily precede “a future peace treaty.” Their emphasis on building bridges between Palestinians and Israelis to “avoid the use of bereavement for further violence and retribution” resonated with me, because I have seen the ruinous tearing down of communities caused by the weaponizing of bereavement (*ibid.*).

In his correspondence with me, William Tabbernee observes that the Parents Circle-Families Forum has effectively education as a tool in intergenerational family communication regarding sociocultural trauma.

“They have established a Reconciliation Center” that hosts a range of activities, including “public lectures, debates, and shows films.” Rich literature and “relevant books” are also available at the Center. All the reading materials provided and engaging activities held at the Center are “geared towards engendering informed discussion by the intergenerational family members affected by the trauma of losing a child as a result of sociocultural trauma.” On his visit to the Reconciliation Center in June 2017, Tabbernee observed the continued effectiveness of these educational sessions. “The key for success,” he sagaciously notes, “seems to be providing accurate information and experiential insights to those affected to enable informed participatory discussion.” Such discussions and interactions between members of historically inimical forces enable the humanization of those who have, traditionally, been viewed as demonic and inhumane. The outcome of “personal/familial healing, reconciliation, and even forgiveness with respect to members of sociopolitical groups who are normally viewed as ‘the enemy’ makes the painstaking work of bridging age-old chasms worthwhile” (E-mail to author, 10 August 2020).

When a community is besieged with tragedy caused either by natural disasters (e.g., tornadoes, floods, wildfires) or human-caused disasters (e.g., war), “there is often a hidden toll on people in the form of mental and emotional trauma.” The psychological trauma that individuals and society as a whole suffer from calamities and human-caused catastrophes can be of greater proportions than physical trauma, “especially when it is intergenerational.” It may be “less obvious,” and at times, people remain oblivious to it. The instantiation that Tabbernee provides of the intergenerational trauma he refers to is the kind by Palestinians “who were dispossessed of their homes and properties during the creation of the modern State of Israel,” which continues to strongly impact their successive generations. Besides affecting the children and grandchildren of those who were expropriated and divested in their individual and familial lives, “this ‘passed-down’ trauma,” and ongoing bereavement renders it nigh “impossible for there ever to be an adequate ‘Two-State’ solution to the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict” (ibid.).

In such situations, can an entire community perpetuate a culture of silence, because facing the devastation wreaked by violence can drive them stark raving mad? The attitude of most Russians occurred to sociologist Metta Spencer when I brought up this question. She notes that the ones she knew “wouldn’t talk about Stalin’s abuses through World War

II, sending people off to gulags, which were forced-labor camps maintained in the former Soviet Union from 1930 to 1955.” Stalin led a ruthless political campaign, called the “Great Purge,” to annihilate dissidents and those he considered his enemies. Nikita Khrushchev, premier of the former Soviet Union from 1958 to 1964, disclosed the horrendous atrocities committed during Stalin’s regime publicly on February 25, 1956. Khrushchev denounced Stalin for the egregious crimes he had perpetrated and for the incarceration of loyal members of the Communist Party on false charges. Spencer highlighted that the reason she thinks most Russians maintained a collective silence about those crimes against humanity was because “they value stability over everything else, and their own history of violence makes it understandable that they think that way.” But, she added, the consequences of that silence “are terrible” (E-mail to author, 24 June 2020).

Does the culture of silence generate problematic stereotypes, alliances, and biases within and outside the community? Invoking Frankl, Kanda notes that the culture of silence in zones of conflict is “characterized by fear, helplessness, and hopelessness which makes people hesitant to reach out.” An atmosphere of anxiety pervades that climate, “which exacerbates several mental, behavioral and physical conditions.” He observes that a “culture of silence” deeply infuses “communities in conflict zones. Those communities display a low social capital, because of which well-being deteriorates and is greatly damaged” (E-mail to author, 10 August 2020).

How does the resilience of families enable them to rebuild their lives? How important is it to keep good memories of a bygone era alive? How important is it to forge intergenerational bonds by sharing those memories, teaching the younger generation about history, and keeping the native language alive, particularly in those families that have been displaced because of political conflict? The significance of good memories cannot be downplayed “as they serve as a source of inspiration by demonstrating how values helped people in their past. Such good memories are used” to create cohesive historical and political narratives, observes Kanda in his correspondence with me. He reminds us that in South Africa, Nelson Mandela employed the courage, which he had inherited from his ancestors and a rich cultural legacy, to overcome Apartheid. Mandela regarded that courage not as the absence of fear, but the capacity to act rightfully despite the fear (E-mail to author, 9 June 2020). Kanda goes on to highlight that intergenerational bonds can be forged by sharing those

memories, teaching the younger generation about history, and keeping the native language alive, particularly in those families that have been displaced because of political conflict.

I asked Kanda to provide me with a concrete example of the importance of keeping good memories alive and vibrant. He recounts that a few years ago he treated an octogenarian woman at a rural hospital in South Africa. She was accompanied by her son, daughter-in-law, and daughter. They had thought it fit to take her to the hospital, because she had been displaying bizarre and aggressive behavior. Kanda recalls that the patient was garrulous and flustered while in the waiting room. However, once she was moved to the consultation room and given an opportunity to “present her side of the story,” she regained composure and was willing to cooperate with those seeking to heal her. The patient was “a retired professional nurse,” who recognized that her cognitive abilities had deteriorated. Although she was not afraid of dying, she claimed, she was fearful of the plight her children and grandchildren would find themselves in the event of her death. Her daughter-in-law confirmed her mother-in-law’s fear by admitting that the family was “besieged by a conflict” caused by her husband’s alcohol abuse and “violent behavior when drunk.” The son also admitted to having abused alcohol and promised his sick mother to get help for his addictive behavior. The patient expressed the wish to spend her evenings with her grandchildren, so she could pass down her community and family stories to them, which she thought would be a way of preserving their cultural identity. Kanda encouraged “the patient and her children to organize such evening story times, as it could potentially help the patient sleep better and become more content. He was pleased to observe that once the family began the ritual of the evening story time, there was a transformation in the patient’s behavior. She became calm and cooperative at home. Although her cognitive functions were still poor and she was unable to remember recent past events, she had “a very good memory of long-term past events.” She enjoyed relaying those memories to her grandchildren, which was her way of transmitting values (*ibid.*).

I have been plagued by these questions since I started to pro-actively observe the sociopolitical discourse in South Asia, particularly Kashmir, through an oblique focus from the margins. In response to my question about a “culture of silence” in a conflict zone, Professor Alhawasi, whom the reader has already been introduced to, sagaciously commented: “It can be intimidating to speak up against the status quo. A culture of silence, however, can be understood as a duty to protect the community

or as a way to show respect to the family or the institution.” Professor Alhawasi further observes that if strife is exacerbated by poverty, ignorance, and lack of human dignity, becoming beset with anomie can be unavoidable (E-mail to author, 9 July 2020). But the social and ethical fabric can be repaired by “finding safe ways to rebuild families and communities” (ibid.).

On the subject of anomie in situations of repression and subsequent trauma, Frankl recounts his experiences at Auschwitz concentration camp, which led him to draw the inference that the only priority of the inmates was their immediate survival and that of their close friends. Ad hoc methods of survival superseded all the values that the prisoners had cherished and upon which they had built their lives. The brutalized world that the prisoners lived in eroded the worth of human life, and the constant humiliations that they were subjected to denuded their sense of self. “... under this influence the personal ego finally suffered a loss of values” (*Man’s Search for Meaning*, 90–91). In such dire situations, the struggle to redeem one’s self-esteem is strenuous; otherwise, the person forgoes “the freedom of being an individual, a being with a mind, with inner freedom and personal value” (ibid.). “As conflict leads to isolation and alienation, it can plague an entire community or generation with anomie” (Kanda, e-mail to author, 9 June 2020). As I point out in my book *Islam, Women, and Violence in Kashmir*, lack of accountability in the larger society can cause a large number of people to toe the line by living with fundamental structural inequities and violence, instead of risking the ire of groups and individuals in positions of authority, both state actors and non-state actors.

I would emphasize that an inimitable camaraderie is restored by the recollection of values and emancipatory traditions of yore. The handing down of cultural knowledge to the younger generation imbues the community with a deeper understanding of the past. The younger generation cultivates the strength to relinquish decapitating ideologies and replenish their souls by reclaiming their unatrophied past. Nurturing memories of liberatory discourses, traditions, and values of the past enables the forging of intergenerational bonds, without which “people have little sense of attachment anywhere and to anything, and thus frequently get lost.” Maintaining a connection with the past ensures that while remaining grounded, people look toward the future. “Again,” Tauber of the Coalition for Work with Psychotrauma and Peace reminds us, “the balance is important.” Sustaining a connection with the past can

empower people in conflict zones to tell their own stories and transform their pain into strength through engaging with history and understanding their geographical and spatial spaces from a perspective that empowers them (E-mail to author, 13 August 2020).

Subsequent to having participated in Project Save the World's Global Town Hall meeting on "Defunding the Military," I asked Metta Spencer, founder of the project and professor emeritus of Sociology at the University of Toronto, how important it was to keep memories of a bygone era alive. Project Save the World sees the connections among six global threats—pandemics, global warming, war and weapons, famine, radioactive contamination, and cyber attacks. Professor Spencer commented that it "depends on how you use that memory." She further clarified her statement: "If it is a vision of how things should be in the future, and a goal that you want to re-constitute, it might be inspiring." Spencer added the caveat that some "people can retreat from reality and live in the past, which would not be helpful." Her email correspondence with me riveted my attention when she brought up Viktor Frankl, Austrian psychiatrist and Holocaust survivor (E-mail to author, 24 June 2020). While in the debasing environment of a concentration camp, Spencer and I remembered, Frankl proclaimed, "The salvation of man is through love and in love. I understood how a man who has nothing left in this world still may know bliss, be it only for a brief moment, in the contemplation of his beloved" (*Man's Search for Meaning*, 67–68). I think, Spencer inferred, "he said that helped him survive." Indeed, it did! Amidst the brutalization that he and the other prisoners in the concentration camp were subjected to Frankl's mind, as he reveals, "still clung to the image of my wife. ... Love goes very far beyond the physical person of the beloved" (ibid. 69).



Conclusion

I have given similar lectures in my state of adoption, Oklahoma, to encourage young people to engage and be informed. Considering electoral processes in my state of adoption are healthier than they are in my state of origin, I remind millennials in Oklahoma to identify issues that are important to them as voters, so they are inspired to make a significant difference by participating. Every small step I take is an attempt to make the world more equitable, just, and humane. But I will not deny the feeling of hopelessness that sets in when one sees the implementation of an inequitable law or a policy that legitimizes the deployment of state violence. How can structural violence be addressed? How can progressive social and political change be facilitated? Can we recognize the structural aspect of oppression and further emancipatory goals, instead of sentimentalizing pain?

On June 1, 2020, I chose to witness grassroots democracy, so I attended the “Demand Justice Protest Rally: Black Lives Matter [BLM]” in OKC. Several of my friends, leaders of faith communities, and current as well as former elected representatives, were there as well. The rally wasn’t about me, but I was keen on showing solidarity with African-American friends who believe that community is the ability to organize and mobilize for social change. The elected representatives at the rally talked about the importance of diligently working to engage African Americans in Oklahoma in the processes of democracy. I would argue

that in doing so they furthered a democratic political project in which minority groups were not required to legitimize their identities as victims. On the contrary, they espoused an effective oppositional politics that critiqued exploitative politics, structural inequities, and did not dwindle into sentimental politics. I did not perceive a fetishization of others' pain or a pathological obsession with violence at that event. The speakers also underscored the importance of standing up as well as the value of the vote, as opposed to indulging in "the public fascination with torn and opened bodies and torn and opened persons, a collective gathering around shock, trauma, and the wound" (Seltzer 3) It was a rich experience for me to see elected representatives identifying issues that are important to voters, so they are inspired to make a significant difference by participating. No one belittled the importance of community and institution building. And now "public opinion polling," as Sociologist Alexander points out in his interview with Gudavarthy, "has stunningly demonstrated..., white American opinion has come to support BLM and racial justice by a far higher percentage than in the first wave of BLM protests in 2013."

My understanding of the complex historical labyrinth that Oklahomans are still navigating was enhanced by Suzette Chang, founder and CEO of "Thick Descriptions." "Thick Descriptions" comprises a team of individuals whose mission is to provide OKEE, Oklahoma Educators Evolve, "a tailored and instructional platform specific for teachers that lack effective methodologies and/or pedagogies for historically overlooked youth." OKEE is in response to a rich community of European-American female teachers who offer investment and great intentions; it is this framework that overlooks the experiences of historically marginalized Oklahoma youth (E-mail to author, 6 August 2020). An additional program "Elephant in the Room Unboxed (EITRU), a monthly conversation addresses uncomfortable and present topics. I learned about EITRU when Chang invited me to speak at their "teach-out" on "Women and Incarceration in Oklahoma." The program encompassed a critically engaged panel discussion comprising scholars, women that had been incarcerated, "Thick Descriptions" staff, and local officials. Our shared values and interests regarding social justice, political enfranchisement, calling out systemic discrimination, and working in the community to advocate for peace and justice led me to posing the following questions to Chang: How does family resilience enable them to rebuild their lives? Can education have

an impact outside the classroom? In order to contextualize the multi-layeredness of the history of African Americans in Oklahoma, impact of formal and informal education, and self-reliance or lack thereof, Chang recounted her interactions with the residents of a historic rural Black town in Oklahoma, Boley, “which was once a thriving mecca for African-Americans” (ibid.). She observes that because of economic challenges, racial discrimination, and segregation that removed African Americans from predominately white spaces, the residents of Boley were autodidacts who learned through “observation, conversations and hands-on learning.” “Traditional learning,” she adds, supplemented the knowledge gained at home. Younger generations emulated the values of the generations that preceded theirs, which girded “their education.” The skills that young people cultivated by imbibing the fortitude and stoicism of their predecessors grounded “them to withstand adversity during the twenty-first century” (ibid.). Chang reminds me that in the late 1800s the nation-wide “Black town development was marked by a sense of self-respect and completion.” African Americans aspired “to outdo white towns” by laying a strong foundation and building an impregnable fortress on it.

“In addition, they hoped to provide employment and political opportunities not available elsewhere” (ibid.). To substantiate her assertion about the cultural intelligence and resilience of the African-American community in Oklahoma, Chang quotes historian William H. Chafe et al. on the history of the segregated south in the United States. She tells me that during the Black town development movement county and state legislators were manipulated, gerrymandering was conducted, and voting restricted restrictions, which ranged “from literacy tests and property clauses, to requiring applications to memorize and recite selections of the United States Constitution” were placed. But the commitment of African Americans in Oklahoma to invest “in each other and their all-Black towns” did not dwindle (ibid.; Chafe et al. 34).

After Oklahoma gained statehood in 1907, a Black town like Boyle “served as an opportunity for African Americans to gain autonomy and be self-sufficient,” but it couldn’t escape the insidious influence of racism, which stretched its tentacles into every institution. It wasn’t long before the dawning of the realization on Boley’s residents that they would have to take the bull by the horns and “manage and control what they were responsible for, meaning land, economy, education, politics, and Boley pride.” A strong collective identity and well-fortified sense of self

ensured that Boley had a progressive educational system, participatory politics, cohesive social system, and political autonomy, placing it ahead of several white Oklahoma towns in the early 1900 s (Johnson 2002). Strategies deployed to suppress the black voters of Boley, which is still a common practice vis-à-vis the African-American community in the United States, did not discourage the commitment of “Boley residents to be self-sufficient, vote and run their own affairs in their own town” (Chang, e-mail to author, 6 August 2020).

Through her conversations with members of the local community, she discerned that “what resonated within each interview is an informal learning methodology, a practice among Boley residents that pushes against traditional learning styles and stems from historical understandings, observations and cultural intelligence” (ibid.). Their practice does not suggest that a love for literature is absent in their daily lives. In fact, it is their strategy of formal and informal learning that strengthens their collective and individual woven identities. Their cultural intelligence is a collaboration of innate and factual awareness of who they are as young African Americans that live in a historic black town, and are geographically surrounded by communities that do not value their humanity. She underlines the agential capacities of this marginalized community, who are the “authors and creators of their identities, strategically grounding their own understanding of resilience and knowledge.” Their resilience is a combination of reflective memories and identical experiences of their ancestors, which for many is inhumane; however, for this community, each memory is a sustaining factor (ibid.).

All of us crave a world in which social justice, political enfranchisement, cultural pride, and self-actualization are the order of the day. The rhetoric of hatred that is palpable the world over undermines rule of law and political accommodation in democratic nations. All well-meaning people are doing their bit to repair divides created by such rhetoric. It was good to see broad-based grassroots politics in action at the rally. I thought it would take me hours to make my way out, but everyone was courteous and people made way for one another.

Should those of us who write on youth movements, people’s movements, and conflict zones accord the authorities more leniency because, legally, the state can claim to have a monopoly on the legitimate use of force? Or should we hold the state and its appendages to a higher standard than militant and vigilante groups? These questions cannot be answered by those invested in the erasure of indigenous histories and asphyxiation

of critical thinking. It is important to explore these questions through personal reflection, because as Nussbaum points out, “the real ‘clash of civilizations’ is not ‘out there,’ between admirable Westerners and Muslim zealots. It is here within each person, as we oscillate uneasily between self-protective aggression and the ability to live in the world with others” (337).

At the end of this book, I’ve come full circle and return to where I started: Jammu and Kashmir. Furthering its project of erasing the indigenous history of Jammu and Kashmir, Prime Minister Modi’s BJP government has dropped July 13 (Martyr’s Day) and December 5 (the birth anniversary of the first Muslim Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah) from the calendar of public holidays of the now-Union Territory. The project of the BJP and its appendages to ride roughshod over the history of Kashmiri nationalism and the evolution of a political consciousness in Kashmir, which began much before 1989, continues unabated. Such erasures must not be allowed to excise the historical memory that includes humanitarian and pluralistic endeavors of South Asian leaders subsequent to the independence and partition of India (Khan, “Erasing Indigenous History of Kashmir”).

I reiterate that this book, in taking multidisciplinary approaches to human rights issues, is a dynamic interplay between activists, academics, and clinicians. It reminds me that faith is much greater than mere dogma or tradition. As Anderson observes, “education should expand critical thinking, empathy, and the sense of personal responsibility. If it does these things, silence and injustice exist as anathema to the basic concept of the Common Good” (E-mail to author, 4 September 2020). To that end, I have contributed to the statewide and discussion program *Let’s Talk About It, Oklahoma*, organized by Oklahoma Humanities. Kelly Burns, Program Officer of Oklahoma Humanities, points out,

with guidance from humanities scholars, librarians, museums, universities, and prisons utilize this program in an effort to explore the human experience through literature. This program opens minds to new perspectives, engages critical thinking, encourages self-reflection and empathy, and a model for civil discourse. (E-mail to author, 14 June 2019)

According to the L. M. Davis et al.’s report for RAND Institute, inmates who participate in any kind of educational program behind bars are up to

43 percent less likely to return to prison. Every dollar invested in correctional education, RAND concluded, saves nearly five in reincarceration costs over three years (14–15).

As an Oklahoma Humanities Scholar, I have given lectures at Mabel Bassett Correctional Facility, which is an Oklahoma Department of Corrections prison for women (“Harper Lee’s *To Kill A Mockingbird*,” 24 Aug. 2018; Jonathan Tropper’s “*This is Where I Leave You*,” 6 Apr. 2018; Robert M. Pirsig’s “*Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*,” 17 May 2019). My emphasis in those lectures was that faith is the courage to bridge divides and to pave the way for the education of the younger generation, which focuses on pedagogical reform. Faith is the ability to organize and mobilize for social change, which requires the creation of awareness not just at the individual level but at the collective level as well. Burns notes that through evaluation forms, participants from Mabel Bassett Correction Facility from McCloud, Oklahoma, revealed that they felt “empowered” by my talks and that “they learned how to better recognize their value as women.” They also observed, Burns points out, that I “genuinely listened to them and cared about what they had to say.” Comments indicated that my sessions made them feel that “although they came from different backgrounds, they have a lot to learn about and from each other; they don’t have to bear their struggles alone, and that people who are different can still come together as a family” (E-mail to author, 14 June 2019). I was gratified that, as they revealed in the evaluation forms, they felt I gave them “a safe environment for self-expression” (*ibid.*).

Before I conclude my book, I would like to share with my readers the concrete examples of community building that I found at the Dr. Ruth Joyce Colbert Barnes Foundation and Oklahoma Sovereign Arts Foundation Benefit Luncheon and Angel Awards on November 3, 2018. I was reminded, once more, that community is much more than mere tradition. Ayanna Najuma, child of the Civil Rights Movement and executive director of the Dr. Ruth Joyce Colbert Barnes Foundation Inc., told me, “The Dr. Ruth Joyce Colbert Barnes Foundation Inc. in collaboration with the Oklahoma Sovereign Arts Foundation is committed to the philosophy of community - feeding families, educating the youth, revitalizing neighborhoods, re-establishing healthy lifestyles, and providing arts and culture to enhance the quality of life for the residents of Oklahoma City. Working together makes that happen. Oklahomans work hard and through their hard work progress occurs. Being of service to the

planet is a personal choice, and we are honored to recognize a group of individuals we call ‘Angels’ for their significant contributions to make Oklahoma great.” As one of the honorees Joan Korenblit observed, “In so many ways, the Dr. Ruth Joyce Colbert Barnes Foundation (RJCBF) and the Oklahoma Sovereign Arts Foundation (OSAF) have enhanced the lives of many, many Oklahomans. In such diverse areas as employment, economic growth, wellness, arts, culture and education, the partnering foundations are greatly improving our state.” Mike Korenblit poignantly reminded the audience about the Frankenstein monster of racial violence in neighborhoods and communities, “On October 28, 2018, two African Americans were murdered at a Krogers in Kentucky, by a White Racist. On October 27, 2018, an Anti-Semite walked into a synagogue in Pittsburgh and murdered eleven Jews (at worship) simply because of who they were. We are still hurting; but we will get through this. We will continue to fight for all those who are marginalized because of what is happening in this country. We hope that all of you will do the same; because it’s the right thing to do” (Khan, “Without a Sense of Caring, There Can Be No Community”).

There is great strength in recognizing that life is never free of pain, and it is empowering to embrace that pain. There is great strength in recognizing that we held up with dignity and resilience when adversity knocked on our doors. There is great strength in finding meaning and purpose in adversity. I continue to reinforce that my faith as an educator in the openness to diverse opinions, dissent, and differences of opinion, which is true grit. I see shared consent between the activists, scholars, and clinicians I spoke with on the fundamental principles of humanity, compassion, empathy, and open-heartedness, which blurs the divide between “us” and “them.”

Although the situations in Jammu and Kashmir, Nazi Germany, Apartheid, and post-Apartheid South Africa, the former Yugoslavia, and the Balkans have their historical particularity, I would point out that we can learn from one another’s response to the specters of past as well as ongoing conflict. I would like to reiterate that the trauma, historical and structural, as well as losses must be worked through. Otherwise, in the words of LaCapra, one faces “... the impasse of endless melancholy, impossible mourning, and interminable aporia in which any process of working through the past and its historical losses if foreclosed or prematurely aborted” (46).

APPENDIX I

CREATING A SPACE FOR ENCOUNTER AND REMEMBRANCE

THE HEALING OF MEMORIES PROCESS

by Undine Kayser



© The Editor(s) (if applicable) and The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2021

121

N. A. Khan, *Educational Strategies for Youth Empowerment in Conflict Zones*, <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-66226-4>

Research report written for the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation and the Institute for Healing of Memories, January 2000.

Undine Kayser is a postgraduate student in the Department of Social Anthropology at the University of Cape Town.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The field research for the report was conducted between 1997 and 2000, in collaboration with the Institute for Healing of Memories, under the supervision of the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR) in Johannesburg and the Department of Social Anthropology at the UCT. It was funded through the CSVR by the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) and the Templeton Foundation. The report forms part of a larger research project aimed at a comprehensive analysis of the TRC process in South Africa.

Acknowledgment and gratitude go to Hugo van der Merwe who edited this report and to all my colleagues who gave their thoughts and feedback to the research process from the Institute for Healing of Memories and the Department of Social Anthropology at the UCT and to Michelle Parlevliet from the Centre for Conflict Resolution in Cape Town.

Contents [Introduction](#)**[A Short History of the Healing of Memories Process](#)****[Organisational Profile of the Institute for Healing of Memories The](#)****[Healing of Memories Research Study](#)**

Objectives of the study
 Research base and
 limitations Methodology
 Research questions

[The Healing of Memories Workshop Model in the Western Cape](#)

Setting
 Participants

Facilitators
 The workshop programme

[Key Concepts in the Healing of Memories Process](#)**[Sketching Some of the Impacts of Healing of Memories Workshops](#)****[Creating a Space?](#)****[Challenges and Potential of the HOM Process](#)**

Testimonial dialogue
 Enacting conflict
 Creating comm-unity?

[Thoughts for the Future](#)**[Conclusions but no closure](#)**

INTRODUCTION

The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) has been the subject of a large number of research studies. At the same time, there have been several lesser-known parallel initiatives to the TRC. These processes were initiated by civil society campaigns, faith communities, and non-governmental organizations and played a role in shaping, affirming, and challenging the TRC's discourse on healing, justice, forgiveness, and reconciliation. This study looks at one of these processes, known as the "Healing of Memories" (HOM). It is an initiative that supported the work of the TRC, but also sought to create an alternative intervention model for speaking about the past. The HOM model has been aimed at offering an additional and different space to the Commission's testimonial arena, providing an opportunity for South Africans to speak about apartheid memories that continues beyond the end of the TRC.

The aim of this report is to examine the HOM process as one intervention in the larger discourse around truth and reconciliation in South Africa since 1994 until today. HOM workshops present one of the few institutionalized post-TRC spaces for South Africans to consciously and practically engage with personal memories and with each other about the apartheid past. The workshops are based on the premise that speaking about one's experiences of the apartheid years can lead to a process of healing, provide relief for the individual, and at the same time initiate a more collective healing process among South Africans. The workshop participants are encouraged that remembering through storytelling can be a positive force for change. The concept of HOM works through an intensive once-off intervention, which aims to help to form links among people and make them aware of their individual and collective powers for personal transformation and healing. It aims to open up a space for dialogue about the past and its impacts in the present.

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE HEALING OF MEMORIES PROCESS

During the negotiations about a peaceful transition of political power in South Africa, discussions were held about the possibility of a Truth Commission as a means to address the legacies of the apartheid system. By the time of the 1994 elections, the proposed Truth Commission had become an issue for public debate in the country. At the end of 1994, a

group of interested members of civil society organizations in the Western Cape¹ called a public meeting in order to discuss the implications of a Truth Commission in the local context of the Western Cape. The gathering led to the formation of the “Religious Response to the Truth Commission” (RR),² a volunteer campaign.

At the same time, former ANC Chaplain Father Michael Lapsley returned to Cape Town from exile to take up the position of Chaplain at the Trauma Centre for Victims of Violence and Torture (Trauma Centre). In 1990, he had survived a letter bomb that was sent to him by the apartheid government. Father Lapsley was part of the RR from its inception and became a driving force in developing possible intervention projects with regard to counseling and support for victims and survivors of apartheid violence.³ Through his own experience of living in exile and having been bombed by the apartheid government as well as the stories of the survivors whom he counseled at the Trauma Centre, Lapsley realized the importance of giving people a space in which their experiences could be told and acknowledged.

Lapsley described how his own process of healing had begun through the affirmation and acknowledgment that his story received from people who listened compassionately. He wished to give a similar opportunity to others. The public process of the TRC would give this opportunity only to a very limited number of people. Where could other South African stories find a place to be told?

The first HOM workshops were held in 1995. Many of the early participants were members of the RR or had come in touch with the initiative through Father Lapsley’s work at the Trauma Centre. The workshop methodology included a combination of discussion forums and personal storytelling sessions in small groups over a period of two days. Elements of autobiography workshops and creative art therapy methodologies were incorporated.

Since their inception, the initiatives of the RR and the Trauma Centre Chaplaincy regarded themselves as a parallel process to the TRC that would support and collaborate with the Commission as well as critically monitor and comment on its work. The HOM process saw the relationship of the initiative and the TRC as one of constructive criticism and mutual support. The Commission regarded the collaboration as positive as well.⁴ The main phase of collaboration between the HOM process and the TRC took place through interaction with the Human Rights Violation Hearings in 1996 and 1997. After the TRC had visited an area (in

the Western Cape), Father Lapsley and his staff were asked to offer a Healing of Memories workshop to survivors in the area. The idea was that all survivors who had testified before the Commission would afterward receive an invitation to come to a HOM workshop.

1998 was marked by a sense of closure in the media and in public debates about the TRC as it began to near its end. It also became a year of transformation and change for the parallel process. In August 1998, the *Institute for Healing of Memories* (IHOM) was formed, and the HOM process became independent from the Trauma Centre. The mission of the IHOM has been largely coherent with the aims of the former Chaplaincy. New elements included the extension of the process into the international arena. The positive feedback by participants in the workshops from other countries such as Rwanda and Ireland led to the idea that the workshop model may also be of use in other contexts outside South Africa. In April 1998, the first HOM workshop outside South Africa was held at Riverside Church in New York, USA. Further international workshops took place in Rwanda, Ireland, Sri Lanka, Australia, and Lesotho. Interest and feedback from these initiatives have been very positive, and more invitations have been received.

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE OF THE INSTITUTE FOR HEALING OF MEMORIES

Currently, the Institute for Healing of Memories operates with:

- three staff members: a director, a full-time networker and organizer, and a part-time administrator;
- the Board (nine members);
- the “Counseling Working Group” (eight to twelve members): planning and development body for the process made up of HOM facilitators;
- 32 trained workshop facilitators of which about 12 are active at any one time; and
- a network of volunteers and other organizations.

The main activities of the IHOM consist of publicizing, organizing, and conducting HOM workshops in the Western Cape (ten annually), nationally⁵ (between six and eight) and internationally (between two and

four). In addition to the HOM model, the IHOM is developing workshop models for dealing with emotions such as anger, hatred and guilt, and processes for reconciliation and forgiveness.⁶ The organization also engages in giving workshops, seminars, talks, and sermons around these topics and works in collaboration with a number of other related organizations in the Western Cape, in South Africa, and worldwide. IHOM is also involved in facilitating the local debate around reparations as part of the Western Cape Reparations Forum.

Between 1995 and the end of 1999, a total of 901 people attended HOM workshops in the Western Cape, and 785 people attended national workshops and 56 attended international workshops. Funding is received from a number of donors; many of them are affiliated to churches and faith communities.

THE HEALING OF MEMORIES RESEARCH STUDY

*Objectives of the Study*⁷

This study focuses on the potential and limitations of practical interventions that seek to facilitate “healing and reconciliation”⁸ at grassroots level. The HOM workshops can serve as one example of such interventions that the South African process of “dealing with the past” has generated. As such, it contributes to an understanding of the many faces and facets that actively shaped the truth and reconciliation discourse before, during, and after the actual Commission’s work. HOM did not operate as publicly as the TRC, but can illustrate the dynamics of a civil society process participating in the South African transition toward democracy. HOM’s efforts to bring South Africans of different backgrounds together in the same space to “tell each other their stories of the apartheid years” are presented as an opportunity for South Africans to *encounter one another* rather than promoting “reconciliation.” The basic idea is of an encounter as human beings who have experienced an inhumane system and are living its consequences (field notes, 1997).

The Healing of Memories process raises a range of questions around interventions that make use of a cross-racial, cross-cultural setting. It also gives an insight into the ways in which those South Africans who continue to be affected by and/or are actively concerned with the apartheid past⁹ conceptualize key themes in the discourse around truth and reconciliation.

Research Base and Limitations

This study concentrates on a description and analysis of the HOM workshop model. My double role as a researcher and facilitator places several advantages and limitations to the study. It gave me the ground for an in-depth anthropological engagement with the people involved and provided me with access to an intervention that usually does not allow researchers to participate as observers. The concept of a “telling space” that operates on the premises of confidentiality and participation does not accommodate the striving for “scientific objectivity” that may be necessary for the researcher. At the same time, my position as a young white foreigner, and specifically a young German woman, in post-apartheid South Africa provided a particular kind of access and limitation to the study, a quasi insider-outsider perspective that can serve as one reflective lens through which to view this process.

It is important to note that the HOM project regards the workshops as a “sacred” and “safe” space where participants tell their stories in an intimate and confidential manner. I therefore attended the workshops in my capacity as a facilitator and not as a researcher. This impacts upon the level of documentation that is possible. I have used my impressions from the workshops as guidelines for follow-up interviews, which allowed for in-depth conversations with former participants. In addition to the interviews, I have also assessed the written evaluation forms that participants fill out after the workshops. However, the information provided on the evaluation forms is not sufficient to create a statistical overview of HOM participants based on attendance, age, former apartheid racial classification, and gender.

Being part of the HOM process at the same time as writing about it leads me to aim for a mode of critical analysis that is constructive to the Healing of Memories process and does not seek to question the fundamental value of the intervention.

Methodology

In addition to my two and a half years of experience and the observations as a participant and facilitator with HOM since 1997, I conducted research for the study over an intensive period of one and a half years. The research methodology included:

- participant observation at twelve workshops;
- participant observation at a number of activities such as presentations of the process to different organizations and strategic planning meetings;
- a range of qualitative in-depth interviews with former participants, facilitators, staff, volunteers, and board members; five focus groups with former workshop participants, facilitators, the so-called Counseling Working Group (which functions as a volunteer planning body for the process), and the Mina Nawe Theatre Group (who present a short drama about the apartheid years at each HOM workshop); and
- the production of a forty-minute video documentary entitled “*Down Memory Lane. A day of remembering District Six*”¹⁰ that shows parts of the HOM model in operation.

The range of interviewees does not constitute a representative sample, but the selection of respondents was based on a range of criteria, mainly:

- diversity of experience during the apartheid years;
- levels of involvement with the Healing of Memories process (participants/facilitators); and
- diversity in terms of age groups, gender, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds, former apartheid racial classifications, and faith group.

The interview sample included one-on-one interviews with ten former participants from diverse backgrounds, as well as two focus groups. In addition, nine facilitators and four staff members were interviewed of whom 50% are white. With the exception of one facilitator and one participant of Jewish faith, all respondents were either of Christian faith (70%) or identified themselves as non-believers (30%).

Research Questions

The interview guidelines were based on three sets of questions addressing:

- contact with the Healing of Memories process and the workshop experience;
- the longer-term impact of the workshop experience; and

- the understanding of key terms: Forgiveness–Reconciliation–Ubuntu–Anger.

THE HEALING OF MEMORIES WORKSHOP MODEL IN THE WESTERN CAPE

Setting

HOM workshops in the Western Cape are held in residence over a weekend of two and a half days, starting on a Friday night and ending Sunday afternoon. Participants are requested to stay for the whole duration of the workshop.

The venues for the workshops are often removed from the participants' living areas, aiming to be in a beautiful and tranquil surrounding to create a sense of "being away from everything." Transport was initially a problematic issue, as the impact of the socioeconomic realities in Cape Town became apparent. Participants come to the venue either in their own transport or by taxi organized by the IHOM.

Participants

Workshops are advertised in the Western Cape in collaboration with a number of different groups, institutions, and NGOs such as the Trauma Centre, the Black Sash, the TRC, and survivor support groups. A large part of the network has been linked to faith communities, their leaders, and individual congregations. Staff and volunteers of the IHOM give presentations and talks about the HOM process around the Western Cape.

The regular public workshops have a range of 20–30 participants and take place at an average of once a month in the Western Cape. Each workshop is conducted by between six and nine facilitators. The public workshops have no particular participant target group at this point in time, but aim to include a wide range of participants from diverse backgrounds in terms of former apartheid classification, economic and social background, language, age, and gender. HOM participants are mostly over eighteen years old.¹¹

The workshops are largely subsidized by the IHOM to ensure that people can participate regardless of their socioeconomic background. Participants who are able to pay are charged a fee of R180. Others are

asked to contribute as much as they can. A large number of participants cannot afford to pay at all and attend the workshop fully subsidized.

Trends among the participant groups show a move from a TRC-related audience to more mixed groups who may not have had any contact with the TRC. This reflects the networking practices of the IHOM that extended from an initial intense collaboration with TRC and related organizations like the Trauma Centre to more general interest groups. In the documentation, there is a noticeable shift from a focus on survivors of apartheid human rights violations to a more diverse participant community. A persisting phenomenon is the difficulty to motivate white participants to come to the workshop. At the same time, white facilitators throughout the process have provided half of the active contingent in the mixed facilitator group. This may be related to the logistical requirements of volunteer work since facilitators invest substantial amounts of time and resources in the workshops and in the planning and extension of the HOM process.

In addition to the “open” workshops in the Western Cape, specific groups have requested workshops for themselves that do not include other participants. These “closed” (and often more homogenous) workshops have been held according to the same program as the open workshops. Participants included church groups, self-help groups of survivors of apartheid violence, former members of *Umkhonto we Sizwe* (MK),¹² and ex-political prisoners. There have also been a number of foreign participants at the workshop who expressed that they gained personally from the experience. This speaks to the applicability of the HOM model in a wider context than just South Africa and the apartheid system.

Motivations and Expectations

The main motivations to come to a workshop as they were expressed at the workshops and during follow-up interviews center on three different aspects:

- personal healing by confronting the past;
- meeting other South Africans, listening to them, and questioning them;

- grappling with existential and moral concepts such as questions around forgiveness, remembering and forgetting, finding ways to move forward, and leaving the destructive impact of the past behind.

Facilitators

Diversity (cultural/racial/language background, age, and gender) is the main criterion for the demography of the facilitator team at workshops. The workshops aim to give people the opportunity to speak in their own language. The facilitators translate when necessary, and the aim is to have native speakers of each of the participants' languages in the facilitator team.

Future facilitators are mostly selected from the participants at the workshops by facilitators who identify potential candidates to join the facilitation team. The majority of facilitators have a background in social professions, teaching, or human resources. Facilitators are trained in HOM facilitation by senior facilitators in two weekend workshops. After the training, new facilitators begin as co-facilitators assisting in the small group sessions during the workshops.

Father Lapsley's presence at a workshop shapes the weekend in a particular way. Many participants mentioned that they see him as an "empowered victim" and drew strength and hope from meeting him. In this sense, Lapsley has been described in the imagery of the "wounded healer" by other facilitators who point to the symbolic role he plays as a lead facilitator during the weekend process. Facilitators and participants perceive him as a central figure, a driving force and "visionary" shaping the HOM process.

The Workshop Program Friday

The Friday begins with the arrival of the participants at the workshop venue in the late afternoon where they are welcomed by the facilitator team. After dinner, the group meets in a session where the *Mina Name* theater group performs a short drama. "*That Spirit*" is a twenty-minute dramatic enactment of scenes from the apartheid years, a powerfully moving combination of interactive drama and song. The scenes that are enacted by the young performance team include a mother who has lost her son, a shoot-out in a township, the story of a young white soldier

who is sent into the townships to kill school-children, a husband who witnessed the rape of his own wife by the security police, and others. A number of the songs are well-known struggle and working songs.

During the performance and afterward, participants are often visibly moved. They are encouraged by the facilitators to speak about the painful memories of the apartheid years that the drama has instantly evoked. Some people may be crying during the performance and afterward because of the memories triggered by the drama and the songs. In the “open floor” commentary that follows the performance, many participants name anger and sadness as the main emotions they experienced when watching the drama. They voice their feelings of frustration and pain when prompted to think back to the apartheid times. The emotions that emerge are affirmed as important by the facilitators. In this way, the opening evening creates a very intense and emotionally charged atmosphere that is often marked by heaviness and a feeling of “having been opened up.” Before retreating to their rooms, participants are given a question sheet asking about their apartheid experiences which will be used for the next day’s storytelling session.

Facilitators explain that this evening session is aimed to be a “catalyst” of memories that is meant to set the mode of the workshop, offer a first release, and create the emotional depth for the next day’s storytelling sessions. The Friday is described as a difficult and tense day by many participants who spoke about the discomfort and insecurities of “being thrown into” a new and mixed group of people, some of which may be regarded as former “enemies.”

Saturday

Drawing Exercise

The morning begins with a drawing exercise in which participants are invited to put their life stories into colors, pictures, or symbols using crayons on a large newsprint. Everyone is asked to work individually for 45 minutes. Facilitators emphasize that this exercise is about an expression of self and not artistic skill. They encourage participants to express their emotions through colors and symbols.

Afterward, the group is divided into small groups. Between four and six participants are allocated to two facilitators who aim for diversity of age, gender, language, and apartheid experience. Participants who know each other are placed in different small groups. An ideal small group, as

one facilitator described it, would “include a diverse range of stories and experiences as well as people from different backgrounds.”

Storytelling

The small groups meet in separate rooms where a circle of chairs has been prepared and water, tissues, and peppermints are arranged. The facilitators then negotiate an agreement of confidentiality and respect among the participants of the small group. They ask the group to create a “safe space” for each other’s stories by listening and supporting the person who is speaking. In this regard, the idea of “safe” means that participants and their stories should be given a space where they are not subject to criticism or attack regarding what they choose to say. The safe space is meant to give room to all participants’ experiences and contain a wide scope of different narratives.

All participants have about 45 minutes to speak about their life experiences and memories in relation to the apartheid years. Non-South African participants are asked to relate their life stories to their country’s history. There is no particular format in which participants’ life experiences (framed as “the stories”) are told. Participants are encouraged to make use of the drawings they have made in the morning. The sheet with questions about experiences of the apartheid years that was given out during the previous evening may be used to facilitate the telling. At the end, the facilitators also tell their “stories.” The mode of telling varies greatly in how participants make use of the “listening space” in the small groups. In many cases, a participant will speak for some time, and afterward, the facilitators and the group will ask questions. At times, a conversation develops out of a story. Participants also choose the level at which they share. Some go very deeply into their memories and the emotions connected to them; others keep more distance. Some narratives are coherent and chronological. Others are fragmented and ruptured, jumping back and forth in time or concentrating on one particular event only. The range of life stories is as varied as the participants’ background. Often, the stories begin to correspond with one another, not unlike a mosaic of South African experiences.

Facilitators often encourage participants to explore the emotional aspects of remembering and to express emotions in the small group. Participants are also asked if faith and spirituality have played a role for them during the apartheid years. Facilitators described that ideally the atmosphere in the small group is concentrated and conveys a sense of

“compassionate listening.” Tears and expressions of fear and anger are often part of the telling. Facilitators aim to balance the time and space that are given to individual participants. The small group sessions last all day and leave everybody profoundly exhausted.

Discussion of Themes and Questions

By the time, the group reassembles in a plenary session late in the afternoon; there is often a sense of relief in the exhaustion. Many of the tensions seen on Friday night have dissipated. There is a sense of having shared a difficult day. With the lead of one facilitator, the plenary group now collects a range of themes and questions that have come out of the day’s listening process. The themes range from emotions such as anger, hatred, and joy to courage and resilience, from betrayal and struggle to initiative and support. Issues such as remembering, forgetting, forgiveness, healing, guilt, and reconciliation¹³ may be discussed. *Questions* that come up often address present needs and concerns such as: How to deal with the present situation that is often shaped by violence, poverty, and unemployment; what future there is for South Africa; if hurt can truly be healed; and if South Africans can live peacefully together? During the hearings of the TRC, a range of questions also addressed the Truth Commission and its formal process, particularly the issue of reparations.

Forgiveness and anger appear as themes for discussion at almost every workshop. My observations are that the discussions on forgiveness are often conducted with a visible sense of respect for each other’s experiences and an urge to understand as well as question one another. But the questions that are asked in the plenary also carry the potential for conflict, anger, and tension that may be acted out in this arena. In some cases, the discussion can lead to a polarization of positions and disagreement among the participants. Here, as in the small group sessions, the diversity of the group plays a role as people may question each other’s choices and motives across historical boundaries. This forum demands highly skilled facilitation if it is to induce dialogue on the issues rather than promoting a particular opinion or model of forgiveness.

After the session, the facilitators ask the group to choose five or six representatives who then use the collected themes and questions in order to draft a program for the “celebration” or “liturgy” that is planned for the next day. After dinner, the whole group meets for a “party” with music, drinks, and snacks. The party is thought to provide a voluntary

space for movement and release of the day's intense energies. Participants have commented that for them it is often a new experience to "socialize across (former apartheid-related) color barriers." The party can also be a chance to begin or continue conversations among participants and facilitators.

Sunday

The Clay Symbol

The Sunday morning begins with another creative exercise. Participants are asked to shape a lump of clay into a symbol that for them represents their experience of South Africa, of the workshop, and their wishes for the future.¹⁴ They are also given a candle.

Facilitators introduce the following event as an opportunity to celebrate the positive themes that have emerged out of the small group sessions and the discussion on Saturday. The mode of the event is meant to draw positives out of the negative experiences during apartheid. It is here that the "redemptive theology" of "overcoming evil" and "celebrating resilience and strength" is played out (see Key Concepts). Many workshop celebrations resonate themes of hope and optimism such as "From Darkness to Light," "Alive Alive!" and "Remembering whilst walking forward." Depending on the participants' affiliation of faith, some celebrations are planned as a church liturgy or a religious service, while others are created less formally, including dance, poetry, and other art forms.

The Celebration/Liturgy

The facilitators often suggest that the celebration/liturgy symbolically begin with a procession from the outside and a small ritual of "burning negatives." For this, a fire is provided in a drum and people proceed to the entrance while singing.¹⁵ Here, they burn negative issues and personal thoughts on what they wish to leave behind, written on a piece of paper.

The rest of the celebration takes place inside a room where people sit in a circle (in the Western Cape, it has often been a small chapel). In most cases, the event consists of a number of readings, songs, prayers, poetry, even short sketches, speeches, and dances. Participants can make individual contributions, and each of the previous day's small groups has to give a contribution that represents their experience during the story-telling sessions. If Father Michael Lapsley is present at a workshop, he

may also offer Holy Communion as part of the event. The celebration culminates in the presentation of the clay symbols. Each participant takes their symbol, lights a candle in memory of a person of their choice, and presents the symbol to the group with a few thoughts. This way of presenting often has a powerful impact and creates an atmosphere of reflection in which people express a spirit of unity and hope for the future, their own, and of South Africa. The celebration/liturgy is meant to bring a sense of closure to the workshop and end in an atmosphere of hope and affirmation.

The workshop ends with a feedback session and the agreement on a follow-up meeting.

Follow-Up Meeting

The follow-up meetings take place on a Saturday afternoon about three to four weeks after the workshop at a church or community hall. The idea is for every former participant to bring a friend or colleague who has not yet been to a workshop. In this way, HOM tries to ensure that the workshops are more than a once-off intervention but generate a community of former workshop participants who can share the experience and motivate others to attend.

During the meeting, the group of newcomers is introduced to the HOM concept separately, while the workshop participants speak about their experiences after the weekend. The facilitators ask what it was like to return home and the group discusses what has happened to them since the workshop (see Impacts).

Follow-up meetings are voluntary and often logistically problematic. The transport capacity that is used for the workshops is not available for the follow-up meetings. Participants have to rely on each other for transport, which exposes some of the realities of apartheid's continuities in the (physical and mental) geography of Cape Town. Many (white) participants who have a car are fearful and not willing to drive into what they consider dangerous areas to pick up other (black) participants, who may not be able to afford the time or transport costs to come to a follow-up meeting.

KEY CONCEPTS IN THE HEALING OF MEMORIES PROCESS

There are a number of concepts at work in the HOM process that are important to the philosophy of the organization and the practice of the

workshops. Some of these concepts are outlined in the documentation on HOM, for example, the facilitator's guidebook. They are marked in brackets as (HOM). Other concepts have been given a heading by me as they are not explicitly noted anywhere in the existing documentation of the process.

Every South African Has a Story to Tell (HOM)

Every South African has a story to tell about the apartheid years. It is the story of what we did, of what was done to us, and what we failed to do (Facilitators' Guidebook).

This concept can be read in relation to the TRC discourse¹⁶ that seems to have contributed to the impression among many South Africans that only people who have been subjected to gross human rights violations have "a story to tell." Many participants from different backgrounds, especially women, arrive at HOM workshops saying that their experiences are not really worthy of being told. Z.M., who is a female facilitator and staff member of IHOM, said:

I am not someone who likes to talk. I do not like talking about my experiences. But as I grew up, as I met other people, I now am able to converse about my experiences. I guess it is because I met other people who also share their stories with me, and I was able to share with them. Because when I first went to Healing of Memories I was almost certain that I do not have a story or that I was not part of what happened. ... Now it is different. I mean, there are many experiences that happened to me. Now every time I go, I tell a different story. (Z.M. 1999)

The idea of the concept is to convey a sense of empowerment and affirmation in the participants' discovery that their life experiences can be put into narrative form and be witnessed by other South Africans. The corresponding notion is that "everyone is worth listening to," which also is meant to work in powerful ways to promote the basic respect for people's voices that has been denied to the majority of South Africans under apartheid.

Allowing a diverse range of South African stories into the same space can help to provide a hint of the complexity, sometimes almost surrealism, of the abnormal "normality" of apartheid's day-to-day reality. Remembering apartheid in a diverse group of South Africans is bound to evoke

strong emotions since stories may be told in a small group that interrogates each other's situations, choices, and motives. This can happen, for instance, when narratives of extreme violation are faced with stories of privilege or ignorance. For example, in a small group that I facilitated, a woman told us about her son's death in the 1980s. He was shot by the security police. In the same group, another woman who had been living not even five kilometers from the site of the killing, "on the safe other side of the fence," remembered hearing shots at night during those times but as she said "chose not to hear" (1997, field notes).

The small groups often grapple with the contradictions inherent in the multiplicity of apartheid experiences and the sense of separate realities of deprivation and privilege. The concept of "every South African has a story to tell" is meant to facilitate the encounter of such difference and use the unsettling elements in a productive way to create an awareness of each other's perceptions of past and present. Through declaring every South African life experience as worth telling and witnessing, HOM attempts to create a common ground for empathy to the other's suffering that may ideally transcend stereotypes and historical boundaries. At the same time, the telling of "all" stories may at times be experienced as disturbing and destructive (see Impacts). Again, the facilitators bear a large responsibility for the success of the process.

Every South African Has Been Damaged by Apartheid (HOM)

This concept is seen by HOM facilitators as an attempt to broaden the framework of the TRC that focused specifically on the damage inflicted by gross violations of human rights.¹⁷ The HOM approach says that the apartheid system was inhumane in a way that left nobody living in South Africa (and many outside) unaffected, be it directly or indirectly.

This concept at the workshops seeks to allow for a kind of "common ground" onto which the tremendous and often contradictory scope of participants' experiences can be projected. At the workshops, it gives every participant a reason and right to attend and to speak of their hurts and pains without necessarily measuring them against others.

This concept could be (mis)interpreted as a form of denial, saying: "We were all victims of an outside evil system" and depersonalize a system that was run and supported by living and thinking individuals, the majority of white South Africans. In this sense, the awareness that the degree of

damage apartheid has inflicted on South Africans varies greatly is important. At the same time, the premise of “everyone has been damaged (in some way)” can assist to unveil preconceptions of a general “white perpetrator-dom” and “black victim-hood.” It can expose some of the “grey zones” of human interaction and give insight into the complexities and consequences of apartheid’s damage on individual people without blurring the larger social realities of (continuing) economic privilege and deprivation.

From the Heart, Not from the Head: A Non-intellectual Mode

HOM facilitators often emphasize that the workshop process is about exploring the *feelings* that may be evoked by an intense process of facilitating memory, rather than a rational analysis thereof. This is evident in the use of the Mina Nawe drama as a catalyst for memories and emotions and in the ways in which HOM facilitators focus on emotions in the storytelling sessions. Discussions of ideas and issues are not a main focus of the workshop. Interestingly, intellectualism carries a clearly negative connotation in this context. Emphasis is instead placed on the concept of “unresolved” feelings such as anger, hatred, bitterness, and desire for revenge that are to be “released” or “worked through” in a collective process:

It is about recognizing that people often need the space to be able to deal with their deepest *feelings*, to give themselves into the movement and to begin to let a whole lot of stuff go. A workshop can create that kind of space for people to stand up and see themselves in relation to others. Because people are extremely lonely in their deepest feelings. And [at a workshop] they begin to realize other people, often very different people, have travelled very similar kind of journeys. (Lapsley 1999)

The “non-intellectual” mode and simplicity of the model are emphasized and can be contrasted with a more psychoanalytical approach. Facilitators stress that the HOM process is run by “ordinary people” for “ordinary people,” and that it is not meant to be an expert intervention space for therapy. At the same time, the HOM workshop is clearly meant as a therapeutic intervention, an alternative and collective process of healing where trained (expert) facilitators create a “safe space” in which emotions are externalized and acknowledged.

Language plays an important role in this respect. As the workshops aim to create a “safe,” comfortable speaking space for participants, they are encouraged to speak in their own language and linguistic mode, while translations are offered for the rest of the group.

Participants often perceive English as a more intellectual language than Afrikaans or Xhosa.

The concept of a “non-intellectual” approach is part of HOM’s attempt to bring together people not only divided by historically racial boundaries, but by culture, language, and educational and socioeconomic background.

A “Journey” toward Healing: the One-Step Philosophy (HOM)

The concept of a “journey” of healing is central to the HOM process. Since the workshops present a once-off intervention in most of the participants’ lives,¹⁸ they are advertised as offering “one step on the road towards healing” (HOM leaflet).

People do not just come to a workshop out of nowhere. There is a journey to the workshop, and there is a journey from the workshop. The workshop is a small journey in itself, one step in between. For some people, it is a small step, and for others, it can break a whole logjam (Lapsley 1999).

The idea is that the workshop can function as a trigger for a transformative process within the individual that will have an impact beyond the weekend. Central to the concept of a once-off intervention is the HOM policy to invite a large number of people to attend a workshop once,¹⁹ rather than inviting the same people to attend several workshops.²⁰

Father Lapsley described the “essence” of HOM as “storytelling in the context of journey” (Lapsley 2000). The workshop is meant to mark one event along a “journey” toward healing and transformation, meaning that it can be *one of many spaces* in which people may choose to engage with the past and each other. It can also be an opportunity for reflection and “time-out.” This concept leaves open the question of whether an intensive once-off experience can have a sustainable impact on people’s lives. How far are individuals taking initiative to change prompted by one workshop experience?

*Addressing the Psychological, Emotional, and Spiritual Consequences
of the Apartheid System (HOM)*

The Healing of Memories facilitators point out that the workshop process is meant to give the opportunity for a once-off experience of storytelling and in this sense is catharsis-oriented.²¹ It does not have the infrastructure for a follow-up process that assists participants with problem-solving and long-term intervention. In cases where participants experience severe and continuous difficulties of a psychological or economic nature, the HOM process can only help with referrals.

The workshop model concentrates on the individual emotional, psychological, and spiritual consequences of apartheid. The context of the system's larger political and economic legacies is seen as important aspects in engaging with apartheid memories, but the process is not meant to facilitate practical, structural interventions or provide training (Lapsley 2000). The focus on emotional, psychological, and spiritual legacies of apartheid underlines the need to inform participants clearly about the aims of the Healing of Memories weekend. While the process is advertised as "open to any South African wishing to wrestle with the apartheid years,"²² the workshops may not be beneficial at particular points in time:

It is maybe not the best option to start dealing with the past if the main concern is putting bread on the table. ... Participants need to be clearly informed about the workshop purpose and what the process can and cannot offer. It may be a process for different people at different times. (Lapsley 1999)

Facilitators explain that in some cases where people's lives continue to be traumatic and dominated by the present need for survival, the workshops may cause conflict and instability, especially if participants had hoped that the process would bring concrete change to their economic situation of unemployment and poverty.²³ This speaks to the ongoing reality of violence in South Africa where past and present traumas and conflicts are often layered and interact. It may also speak to the notion that dealing with the past is a "luxury" that is more beneficial in a situation of stability and safety and with access to basic resources. At the same time, many of the disadvantaged participants expressed the need for hope and said how the workshop, even if temporarily, gave them motivation and energy to carry on.

In concentrating on the emotional, psychological, and spiritual aspects, Healing of Memories workshops aim to create a space in which South Africans meet despite socioeconomic inequalities. It is here that encounter is thought possible through the “performance” of a new South African equality, albeit for the duration of a weekend only. Father Lapsley mentioned that he views HOM as “part of a larger package” of healing interventions²⁴ (Lapsley 2000).

“Getting the Poison Out”: Release of Emotions Through Storytelling

Father Michael Lapsley often uses the phrase “getting the poison out” when referring to the emotions that the Healing of Memories workshops seek to address:

Let us pull out anger, but hatred and bitterness and desire for revenge [need to be released]. In a sense, they are all destructive while anger is not necessarily destructive. It can actually be positive as well. I think emotions like hatred and bitterness are destructive. To put it another way - it is about how do we get the poison out? Because of what it does to us. It is about recognizing that people are justified to have those feelings, yet they are destructive. They imprison people and destroy them from within. (Lapsley 1999)

This explanation points to the underlying concept of healing in the HOM process. The “poison” in this concept is negative energies and emotions that continue to have detrimental effects on the individual as psychological consequences of apartheid experiences. The idea of framing the speaking of memories as “storytelling” is then directly aimed at the release of such emotions through a collective process of narrating life experiences. The idea of illness or damage as a result of violation, pain, and suffering conveys a sense of pathology, something that needs to be “cleansed” from the individual through the act of sharing memories. This metaphorical discourse of viewing the process as one of “opening and cleansing the wounds so they can heal” resonates with the concept of healing used by the TRC.²⁵ Taking into account the complexities of the damage inflicted upon people by apartheid, one may question critically the healing models that are applied in a society where being “damaged” in the broader sense is the norm rather than exception.

The Redemption Motive: Remembrance as a Form of Celebration

For healing, South Africans need to remember their hurts, tell their stories, and be accepted/respected/listened to (HOM Facilitator's Guidebook).

Another important motive at the workshop is that of "remembering as opposed to forgetting." Participants are encouraged to remember, and speaking about their memories is encouraged as a means for empowerment. The way in which the workshop's formal frame is set is meant to enact a movement from negative to positive, from pain and suffering to release and hope:

There is a theological word that I use: How do we make the past redemptive? It is about bringing life out of death, good out of evil. Which is not saying that evil is not evil. It says yes, evil was evil. But out of it - can there be something that is life giving? In recognition that whatever happens to people can either diminish them or make them strong. (Lapsley 1999)

In the small group sessions, facilitators often try to draw out positive elements in someone's life story: moments of courage; support; friendship; collaboration; and love, in contrast to hurt and suffering. This positive momentum is picked up again at the celebration/liturgy on Sunday where people are encouraged to enact a mode of redemption through the passage of "revisiting the bad times," now celebrating their ending and new possibilities for the future. As much as this concept aims to combine healing with remembrance, the themes of "release" and "letting go" also appear in the rituals that are created—especially during the "burning of negatives"—and speak of a necessary process of forgetting. The ambivalence between the themes of healing, forgetting, forgiving, and remembering remains in the stories and the discussions. It may be that in this ambivalence lies the potential for dialogue around the meaning of transformation and the complexities of healing under the current circumstances.

"From Victim to Victor": Forgiveness as Empowerment

Forgiveness as a theme plays a significant role at nearly every workshop. The facilitators may at times prompt the discussion, but the participants often bring up forgiveness as a theme after the storytelling groups. The

fact that it evokes emotional discussion at almost every Saturday evening session I have observed speaks of its presence in the larger process.

The context that Father Michael Lapsley uses in his interpretation of forgiveness is marked by his own experience as a survivor of apartheid human rights violations. It is explicitly not about “forgiving and forgetting,” but promotes “forgiving and remembering” (Lapsley 1999, field notes). He speaks of “a journey of healing and empowerment,” of going from being a “victim to being a survivor to becoming a victor.” Forgiveness can play a crucial role in this process as a possible way of releasing “destructive and imprisoning emotions.” The victim can take control of the situation regardless of whether there is a perpetrator, an apology, or a sign of remorse and use forgiveness as a means to “overcome the evil of the act of violation.” In this sense, forgiveness functions as a collective process, a coping strategy used in connection with the act of sharing the experience with other participants who “help carry each other.” The non-existent listening ear of the perpetrator²⁶ becomes replaced by the collective listener-ship of the other participants.

Father Lapsley stresses at the workshops that forgiveness is a long and costly process that must not be promoted as “cheap” or easy. He notes that forgiveness should be only as important in a HOM workshop as it is to the people who come. Other issues may be more important for participants, and forgiveness should not be imposed. He emphasizes that Healing of Memories does not run “Forgiveness-Workshops” (Lapsley 2000). At the same time, forgiveness is described by the majority of Healing of Memories facilitators as a “necessary step on the road towards healing.”

Encounter of the “Other” through Listening: A Collective Healing Process?

Listening is a gift we can give to people. Listening is also hospitality. It is the offering to someone of a space in which to feel welcome, met, safe, free to be him/herself, to be listened to, and heard. ... This healing process helps us to further our journey toward peace and reconciliation (HOM Facilitator’s Guidebook).

In contrast to conventional one-on-one therapy, the workshops are framed as a collective healing process. The concept that “people need each other in order to be whole” (Lapsley 1999, field notes), often expressed through the term “ubuntu,” is a frequent theme at the HOM workshops.

Father Lapsley spoke about “finding a common humanity in each other” and relates the theme of “ubuntu” to his experience of disability after his bombing by the apartheid government. Losing both his hands in the letter bomb attack, he will need assistance for the most basic tasks of life. Learning to depend on others on a daily basis, he described how he “realized that we need each other to be fully human, not only for me in a physical sense but for all of us in a spiritual sense” (Lapsley 1999, field notes). He points to the notion that healing has to be a collective as much as an individual process.

SKETCHING SOME OF THE IMPACTS OF HEALING OF MEMORIES WORKSHOPS²⁷

Opening Up

Several participants mentioned the strong impact of the Mina Nawe drama group’s performance on the Friday night and pointed to its function as an emotional trigger of their memories. They said that it brought them “right back to the days of apartheid and how it felt.” In this regard, the approach of the workshop to focus on the feelings that go with remembering the past rather than a more rational approach is experienced as a challenging but positive aspect of the workshop:

[The performance] got me to go much deeper into my feelings than I had before, it was very very hard but it was a good thing. (R.M. 2000)

Telling the Stories and Listening to One Another

Asking about the most significant aspects of the workshop, the majority of responses centered on the second day of the weekend. Many participants experienced the “storytelling” session in small groups as the most intensive part of the workshop and described it in retrospect as having the most profound impact. The coherent telling of one’s life story²⁸ in relation to the apartheid years was for the majority of participants a first-time experience that offered a moment for reflection and some new perspectives on their own lives.

Participants said that they had never spoken about their personal experiences of apartheid in the way they did at the workshop.²⁹ They also

mentioned positively the ground for identification and comfort in the realization that they are not alone in their suffering:

The most important part for me was when we were telling stories, our stories, you see. That was the most crucial part because that enabled me to understand even other people's stories. That I am not the only one who is in the quagmire, but we are many, you see. The problem with people is that if you think that you are the only one who has a problem, then it becomes a problem. But if I know that I am not the only one - we are many here and we can help each other - then the burden does not become a bigger thing. It becomes reduced. (A.H. 1999)

Participants mentioned the impact of "feeling listened to" by the small group, and how much it meant to have so much time to explore the stories with the help of the facilitators and the group. A young artist spoke about how the telling and listening gave her a sense of community and how she felt that the participants providing a collective healing space for each other:

I felt profoundly affected by the sense of inclusion that happened after we told our stories and people went out. There was a kind of naturalness that everything inside you had been heard and had been accepted. I found that most incredible because even though I have been trying a lot in therapy to come to terms with the things affecting myself inside me, there has never been an external group in my life that wants to do that. (L.L. 1999)

A special emphasis is placed on relating one's life story across historical boundaries: "It was special to tell my story to a white person"; "I was stunned that a black person listened to my story" were some of the common responses. At the same time, the listening to one another, or maybe in a sense listening to the "Other," was noted as very important. Several of my interviewees pointed out the degree to which many South Africans still live mentally and spatially segregated and in fear of each other. Carin who runs a small business and sees herself as "a South African all my life long struggling with my own racism" related:

Something happens when you actually see someone sitting in front of you and telling you about their experience of being a South African rather than getting [the information] through the media. I think it is hard for people from outside to understand how little contact South Africans have with

one another. It is just not that easy to bridge that gap. There was not even a venue for it. That is what apartheid was about - to stop people from meeting on a normal basis so that they could understand how wrong the whole thing was and that other people were not all monsters. ... Something happens inside you when you see a person that you can actually touch right in front of you. And if you maybe went through that process many many times you would feel at one with the other people as South Africans instead of being afraid. (C.K. 1999)

A participant who was a freedom fighter during the apartheid years and today is working with survivors at the TRC, related:

I felt good after talking a little about what I went through. And also it was interesting to find myself among the people who come from totally different backgrounds, who were playing different roles at the time. I do not remember one moment when they did not look eye to eye, so to me that was quite interesting. I thought it was an achievement. We had someone whose father was burnt to death by so-called comrades and by another group who belonged to another scam, who was a policeman and so on. So sharing all those kinds of stories together and people were *listening* to one another, and at the end of the day they were accepting the others. It is a small thing, but I think it was an achievement. (M.M. 1999)

His and other responses speak to the potential of storytelling to facilitate an understanding of the complexity of the damage that apartheid has inflicted upon people. Participants described how through the stories they were given a window onto the larger picture of apartheid as an inhumane system and found a complexity that put clear-cut boundaries into question. It allowed them to look beyond fixed categories such as “good”–“bad,” “white”–“black,” and “victim”–perpetrator.”

Rediscovering a “Common Humanity”?

Some participants who suffered severely under the apartheid system and were physically violated explained that they found it meaningful to tell their stories and hear and feel the response of people whom they would have regarded as “the enemy” before. After a workshop, a former participant who also made a statement to the TRC described to me that

experiencing a compassionate response to his story at the HOM workshop had helped to return his belief in the humanity of (white) people. He said:

[At the workshop] I found out that white people actually have a heart. It never seemed possible to me in those dark days. We always thought white people have no hearts, they cannot have. (J.W. 1998, field notes)

Other participants affirmed the significance of recognizing each other as human beings rather than in terms of the persistent apartheid classifications, “black,” “white,” “Indian,” and “colored,” and experiencing compassion and empathy for each other’s stories and emotional reactions, despite the range of stories from extreme privilege to severe violation. Some of the interviewees explained how the notion of a “common humanity” might be used to transcend hatred and racial stereotypes:

In that workshop it gave me the power to understand that I should not look at you as a white person. I must appreciate you as a human being and you should not look at me as a black person. And even if we talk private things we must talk as equals. You see? We must not look at each other’s color or whatever you see. So that workshop gave me that tool which was very important. (A.H. 1999)

At the same time, the workshops have to maintain the delicate balance between wishing to overcome racial boundaries and acknowledging their realistic existence and consequences; else, they are in danger of blurring boundaries in favor of a superficial “reconciliation” experience (see next section: Bridging Separate Realities?). It remains a big challenge for facilitators to balance the need for in-depth and at times conflicting engagement with the desire and need for harmony and unity. Both are necessary elements if the phrase of a common humanity is to be more than a word, and if it is to build the ground for a genuine encounter and fruitful dialogue in a post-apartheid South Africa with its multiple divisions.

Meeting Across Physical Boundaries

In accordance with the economic, social, and psychological legacies of apartheid that continue to entrench modes of segregation between South

Africans, there are few spaces in Cape Town where South Africans of different backgrounds come together. Moreover, opportunities to speak about the apartheid past and its role in the present context of South Africa and the Western Cape are lacking.³⁰ Many daily interactions in South Africa operate on the assumption of a presumed (and superficial) “rainbow nation” unity, which is based on the notion of apolitical-ness and practices of forgetting, closure, and exclusion of the memories of apartheid experiences. Yet these experiences continue to shape people’s actions, choices, and sense of self.

In this regard, HOM workshops offer a rare space for an interaction that consciously includes the apartheid experience at a deeper and more sustained level than would be possible at work or in the domestic sphere where most of the old categories and power balances are at play. Carin’s previous quote already mentioned the novelty of physical contact across the boundaries that apartheid created. Other participants emphasized the significance of such simple gestures as shaking hands or giving a hug:

Two things, I think, have helped me, or seem to help. First of all is being able to listen. The other one is touch. I would not want to shake the hand of a white person before. I would stand with my hands behind my back. The person would say to me: This is Undine. And I would say: How do you do? But I would not do anything. My hands would be behind the back. And this would tell that person immediately: This chap is not prepared to extend the hand of friendship at all. But what I have discovered with Healing of the Memories is that it is easier. What tenderness does is so significant to the human. It is because for the first time two people are going to hug each other who have never ever touched each other before. And to do that, to suddenly do that! When you come into the workshop with these feelings of apprehension, feelings of fear, all kinds of feelings of the unknown - all of a sudden you got to take this person by the hand. And it’s okay for him too. That is a very powerful message. (D.H. 1999)

Bridging Separate Realities? Socioeconomic and Cultural Divides

A number of people who would count themselves among those who enjoyed apartheid’s privileges affirmed the strong impact of hearing a first-hand account of what reality looked and felt like “on the other side of the fence” or (specific to Cape Town) “on the other side of the railway-line.”³¹ White participants often describe the individual accounts of participant’s experiences of violation as an “eye-opener.” They spoke

about how it motivated them to relate these experiences to themselves and to the present:

In a way through the stories things actually come alive. They are real. They are there. What those people were saying was profoundly real even though there was that separation between us. The people there [at the workshop], their humanity was like evidence that there is that life in me that wants to relate to other people. But it has been cut off. (L.L. 1999)

Several participants testified to the novelty of being in the same space with South Africans of different background and color. They also spoke at length about the empowering feeling of being able to communicate and relate to one another.

At the same time, the attempt to facilitate encounters across historical, cultural, and socio-economic boundaries is bound to be complex and conflicting. While the experience of bringing each other's "realities" into the same space is described as having many positive aspects, it can also be overwhelming and difficult to integrate with a reality of continuing discrimination and inequality. One of the long-term facilitators spoke about his own and other participants' experiences:

First of all you bring these people from all different perspectives into one group and think that this is the rainbow South Africa for a weekend. And off they go again. There is a lot of dignity that needs to be picked up. There is a lot of respect that needs to be picked up. There are a lot of values coming with lots of different individuals. I for one know that a lot of people do not feel comfortable with all the other people [at the workshop]. And there are lots of complexes, inferiority complexes, mainly from black people. About lots of issues. And they sit with it all through that weekend. And everybody is being so nice to them. It is almost overwhelming. All of a sudden you have a white person offering to bring you tea or go to your table to make you toast and all that stuff. And it really outdates what was happening before. And lots of people find it difficult to actually deal with that one first of all. ...

Though it is needed to put everybody else on equal footing, it can be unbearable at times. ... Where we come from most of the people know that we are the maids, that we are the houseboys, that we are whatever. And our people cannot comprehend where [white] people come from who create this equality and who are actually being so nice and are doing things for me. They hold my hand, hug me, be my friends, and stuff like that.

I mean we go back into our own communities. And on Monday you just go out and be the housemaid again.

Maybe you get your Madam at a different level, in a different mood on Monday morning. And you cannot comprehend: I mean, I have just been with white people the weekend and they have been so nice to me? And there I come to work and this devil of a Madam is already making me feel uncomfortable. So that is the thing that I do not know. Are we doing something good? (B.B. 1999)

This response raises a number of questions around the impact of the weekend experience. How far are present power balances challenged at HOM workshops? How can participants integrate the experience of the workshop with their present lives? How far can the workshop be an empowering experience?

In addressing the psychological, emotional, and spiritual consequences of the apartheid past, the HOM process concentrates less on the political and economic legacies; yet they inevitably affect the workshops in various ways.

The temporary “freedom” from economics (in a place away from the context of continuing spatial segregation and where everyone is cared and catered for) seeks to create a sense of equal ground for the moment. At the same time, the socioeconomic divide between participants remains. It mirrors the racialized socioeconomic divide that continues to exist in post-apartheid South Africa. For some participants, the workshops can mean a “carefree” weekend away in a nice quiet (non-violent) venue and with good food, while for others they may represent a weekend of having to share a dorm and canteen food away from the comforts of home. Still, the physical setup of the workshops is closer to a middle-class comfort zone than to many of the participants’ standards of living who come from the so-called townships or locations. During workshops, moments of conflict arise when the presence of these divides seems to intrude upon the “equal grounds” approach of the workshop. C.K. describes her sentiments:

I think one of the parts that I did not like was that some of the black attendants of the workshop had a funny attitude, or what I have seen to be a funny attitude. At some point they just wanted to finish off all the cool-drink that was in the fridge and somehow that raised up my feelings of racism. Why do they always have to feel that we owe it to them and that they have to finish all the stuff? Can they not think: Maybe the next group will also want to have some cool-drink or something? Why do they

feel like that? Why do they want to take it all for themselves and now-type of thing? It wakened up my racist feelings and I felt really angry. And I realized there is just something I just do not understand. (C.K. 1999)

This statement does not only speak of the socioeconomic divide but emphasizes the notion that participants may not comprehend each other as living in separate realities. In addition, it also speaks to the notion of cross-cultural interaction at the workshops where different concepts of viewing and perceiving the world meet. In the workshop situation, misunderstandings have to be read in the complex context of interactions across historical as well as cultural boundaries in addition to the legacies of apartheid socialization. Cultural concepts that may drive motives, choices, and behavior are often unfamiliar, and one may ask to what degree the Healing of Memories process aims to facilitate a cross-cultural approach to healing and interaction.

Performing the New South Africa—A Non-Racial Society?

[The workshop] does seem a bit like a sneak preview. That this could be the South Africa that we want (B.B. 1999).

Respondents mentioned the celebration or liturgy that is jointly created by participants and facilitators on the Sunday morning as a memorable event. Participants remembered presenting their clay symbols to each other as a very meaningful act. Many, and this applies across racial boundaries, alluded to the celebration as an event that left them in a euphoric mood where a sense of unity and community had been created that they had not thought possible among a diverse group of South Africans. L.L. spoke for a number of positive responses when she said:

I realized that my own immediate family is responsible for that I never felt 'held' in any community before. Because of that the Healing of Memories was such a powerful thing. There was a sort of loving healing family that was there and that actually affected me quite enormously [in a positive way]. (L.L. 1999)

Another example is Irene Mxinwa who attended the first workshop HOM workshop with me in 1997. She is the mother of one of the seven young men who were killed in an ambush by the security police in Gugulethu in March 1986. At the end of the weekend myself, another young white

facilitator and “Ma Irene” as she was called from then had formed a special relationship, and Ma Irene expressed a sense of excitement and joy after the Sunday celebration:

I lost my son in the struggle and the pain of the loss will remain. But after this [Healing of Memories] experience I feel I actually have new children, two white daughters. I feel happy about that. (I.M. 8/97)

A significant aspect for participants centered on experiencing difference in a positive way and seeing that South Africans can share the same space and be together as (a) people with all their differences. This was not necessarily presented as celebrating difference in the performance of unity alone, but was perceived as important in contrast to a day-to-day reality where difference is often experienced as entirely negative. My observations and conversations affirmed that many participants embark on a process of self-reflection and questioning that extends beyond the individual to issues such as national unity and collective healing. R.M., who is a HOM facilitator, works in the human resource field:

The fact that you are people at the workshop and also that you are of different races but you are a people at the workshop - it makes your life and how you look at the next person completely different. Completely different. I do not know what would have happened in my life had I not been through Healing of Memories. I really do not know. Because it is not easy living in Cape Town and being an African person who is conscious about racial things. You get white people who still think that white people have got the intelligence gene. Still, still! I think my friends know me as a person who would blow. I mean I would actually react to small things, little things and get very upset and ill actually.

And I do not do that anymore [since my involvement with Healing of Memories]. I do not even realize that I do not do it anymore. (R.M. 1999)

A Sense of Belonging—Initiating Citizenship?

A number of HOM participants explained how the South African process of transition is affecting their communities. Socio-political changes are experienced as a rupture to previous notions of community, communal identity, and belonging and have an impact on participants' motivation to attend HOM workshops. This may relate to the need to redefine

one's identity within the dynamics of transition and changing fault lines within different communities.³² Participants of different backgrounds raised questions around belonging to the new South Africa, around the meaning of citizenship and active participation in nation-building:

I feel more connected to South Africa because of Healing of Memories. I am more of an insider now; my own experiences here have become more comprehensive. It made me feel I belong here and I can be here. It is an intuitive feeling more than a rational thing. You know it [the workshop] did you some good but you do not quite know why. (J.G. 2000)

A number of participants who would count themselves as beneficiaries of apartheid spoke about the need to find “a place” in South Africa and emphasized a new sense of belonging, which they found at the workshop:

When I heard about the Healing of Memories I know I struggled a lot, for about three to four months, asking whether I have the right to attend the Healing of Memories. Because [I asked myself] did I really struggle? Was I really a victim? How are black people going to accept the fact that I went to a very privileged school? I found the most important thing for me in the Healing of Memories was that I gave myself the right to own my South African-ness. So for me it was very much a turning point because before that I felt very much like an outsider in my community, in the larger South African or Cape Town community. I always say about the Healing of Memories that it gave me my passport. At that point it was stamped and I was a South African. (B.M. 1999)

Healing

A.H. is one of many participants who claimed to have found a sense of healing in the workshop. After serving his full term in prison for killing two white men in the fight against apartheid in the eighties, A.H. took the decision to apply for amnesty to the TRC. He did this despite discouragement from his comrades who said that it would unjustly place him into the category of “perpetrator.” He explained that what motivated him to apply for amnesty was the hope that he would contribute to a changed South Africa:

The cry that I made in the TRC - it was a cry about that I myself, I was the perpetrator. I myself was being looked on as redundant, as a killer, as

a murderer, a murderer who might have been perceived by many people as a criminal, particularly in white circles. It was a cry of hope and a cry of honesty, that is why I said that the cry was different from that one of crying for a brother. Now here, this was a cry of the nation. I was crying for this nation, for the South African nation to become a better nation amongst nations. (A.H. 1999)

A.H. said that the HOM workshop experience was a critical force in shaping his decision to apply for amnesty at the TRC. He commented how Healing of Memories contributed to his emotional healing and helped him to regain his sense of himself as a person:

The special thing about the workshop, it was my first time to see people crying. Ahh, what apartheid did to me, it damaged my emotional reactions. It damaged my characteristics as a person. There was one stage in my life where I could not laugh, where I could not have an emotional reaction for another person, where I could not even cry. So it nearly killed the whole being of myself. I would just look at you and say 'This is a woman and there is nothing that I am going to appreciate about this woman.' But after that workshop all those things came back and became normal to myself, hence I am saying that this was the most important thing in my life. (A.H. 1999)

Getting the Poison out—Opening Wounds?

The majority of participants found that the workshop did help them to get in touch with their emotions. Many also voiced that they found release in the process of sharing their experiences and feelings. At the same time, the emphasis on the release of negative emotions may cast them in a light of good/bad, or positive/negative, and feelings are then not viewed in their continuities and complexities. At the same time, traumatic memories have force and may have been “forgotten” or suppressed as psychological protection with good reason. One of the facilitators voiced the concern that careful consideration may be necessary in the context of an intervention that works with the concept of “releasing emotions” in a once-off storytelling if afterward people go into a situation without support structures:

I think, what we do is we open up these wounds and people bleed a hell of a lot. And I have a sense that they are expected to go back and be

strong again. And nothing is there to support them, especially for those who come from out of Cape Town, like Worcester and places like that, that are far from here. I think it is difficult because the weekend is so short for this kind of thing. You do not have the chance to breathe and go slowly. And for a person who has never talked about this, who has never connected with that is inside you, it is difficult. (R.M. 1999)

She related this to her own experience as a participant and emphasizes the need for follow-up processes and support mechanisms after the workshops:

Because when I went the first time I was really exhausted and I was really sore. I was starting to see myself as a different person. I had all these things going on in my mind all the time. And there is only me and my son in the house. What could I do? I am fortunate that I do counseling at work here. It was not easy, but at some level I actually disconnected and looked at myself there. But what happens to a person who actually went through terrible, terrible things and is expected to go back? ... When you leave [the workshop] on Sunday, you are so spent. And these things come back to you, slowly. The wounds are open, and I do not know if people have got the ability to shut them themselves, to layer them themselves. (R.M. 1999)

Anger and Forgiveness

Participants repeatedly spoke about the themes of anger and forgiveness. The two are linked in the HOM discourse in interesting and at times contradicting ways. A number of interviewees found the HOM workshop a place to voice their anger and accept it as an important emotion. O.P., a former participant who is working in the performing arts in Cape Town, spoke about his process of acknowledging his anger at the workshop:

I must say I still walk around with a lot of anger because people do not make the [mind] shift. And I must say I do not know why I tend to meet those more than other people. There is a lot of negativity. I find it very difficult to just be at ease with what is happening. Part of the workshop has helped me to recognize that I am not wrong in my judgment or I am not doing myself a disadvantage by recognizing all of this [anger]. And at the same time I am trying to push through and not be a victim. (O.P. 1999)

There is a danger in the HOM discourse that certain emotions, particularly anger and the rejection of forgiveness, are viewed as “improper” and negative by the rest of the group or even the facilitators, so that the person who experiences the emotion leaves the workshop with the feeling of being inadequate or “not yet there.” Instead of experiencing release or affirmation, participants feel exposed and confused. The way in which a space is created for people to speak about their emotions demands flexibility and skill from the facilitators, especially in terms of building trust and giving space to a diverse range of ideas about a contested and historically loaded concept such as forgiveness.

Participants’ understanding and interpretations of forgiveness were varied, but many were influenced by the TRC’s discourse on apology, confession, forgiveness, and release.

Two concepts that participants mentioned repeatedly are:

- the idea of “forgive and forget” as a concept that is prevalent in South Africa; and
- forgiveness as a means of coping with the present challenges.

Both concepts speak to the wish of “moving on” from a situation. The following excerpt from one of the focus groups illustrates this:

A : But I am trying to change. I am trying to forget. It is easy to forgive, but it is not easy to forget.

B : Do you think that the workshop was about forgetting?

A : Because everybody was preaching forgive and forget, everybody was talking forgive and forget. And to me it is not easy to forget.

B : At the workshop people were saying forgive and forget? *A*: Yes.

C : For me it was rather about how I get to terms with it. That it is not a matter of forgiving and forgetting, but it is a matter of how you cope with it. For me, I have always been a Christian believer and people said: you must forgive and must forget. That is the way I was brought up - forgive and forget. But on that weekend I felt, you cannot just forgive when people hurt you, when things happened to you in the past. You cannot just forgive. And I mean at the age of nearly forty I can as a person say: It is not evil; it is not bad that I have got resentment towards the whites or someone that hurt me. I learnt that on that weekend. I came to terms with myself and it was good. It is how you cope with it. If I cope with my feelings, if I am cross, I have a right to be cross and

not because I believe and I go to church I have to suppress that feeling all the time.

...

D : For me it is also about coping. Because part of this workshop made me realize that if I want to become part of this new South Africa then I have got to [cope]. I cannot go into it with the same mentality because I am not a victim; I am not supposed to be a victim. (Focus Group 1999)

The last statement resonates with the connection that Healing of Memories draws between forgiveness and a notion of “empowerment of victims.”

In some cases, the actual act of asking for forgiveness has taken place among participants. This has not happened in a direct mode between the victim and the perpetrator of a specific incident of violation, but rather in a displaced form in that some white participants felt the urge to ask some of the black participants for forgiveness. Some participants have experienced this as very meaningful:

I think that forgiveness is possible, amazingly. When these things were happening to us black people, to white people also, during apartheid, I myself did not think that I would ever forgive. I actually was angry when I realized how bad apartheid had been. The more I knew the angrier I got, but I forgot that I have in me the ability to forgive. I did not consider that. ... And in that short weekend you see things so differently. That forgiveness is something that you have. It is not something that you have to go and get. It is within you. I mean it is such a powerful thing to think that somebody says to me: ‘I am sorry about things, about the way things were.’ And they genuinely mean it! ... Especially if it comes from a white person. (R.M. 1999)

The complex dynamics of the dialogues around forgiveness that take place at HOM workshops are very personal to participants. They can also lead to conflicting and negative encounters. If the idea of asking for forgiveness is perceived as imposing, it can be offensive and lead to a sense of further violation. At the same time, critical participants questioned if forgiveness then becomes a “feel-good” exercise for white South Africans. Some of the complexities are reflected in the description of a participant from a mainly Afrikaans-speaking northern suburb of Cape Town:

There was one black guy [at the workshop] who was really hurt ... What I did there for the first time personally, I asked his forgiveness. I said: "I want to say this for myself and for a lot of other people who are never going to say this.

That I'm sorry." I had never done that before that moment and I've never done it since. I think it was sort of owning up and taking responsibility for what my people have done. ... But I think he was not ready to forgive. We ate together after that, and one of the facilitators saw what happened. She said to him that he must come to me and say he accepts the confession or something like that. ... I think he did something of that sort, but I did not think he was at the right point. It did not matter for me what he did with it, in a certain sense. (N.S. 2000)

Religion and Spirituality

The HOM facilitators emphasize that the workshops should offer a process to everybody, regardless of religious affiliation and belief. However, the majority of the facilitators are practicing Christians, which appeared to have a clear influence on the role of religion in the process.

The workshops aim to express the connection between healing and spirituality (and not necessarily healing and religion), which mainly finds its expression in the rituals around the celebration on Sunday morning. Participants described this event as very powerful and emotionally touching and said that it allowed them to leave the workshop with a feeling of hope and accomplishment. Many participants saw the connection to spirituality and/or religion as important for healing. While the participants themselves have some input in the way in which religion is played out during the weekend, this aspect can lead to sentiments of exclusion among some, especially if religion is enacted through a strong Christian discourse. This may depend upon the individual facilitators present. A young Jewish participant commented:

That I think I got angry about, but I do not know how important religion is for some people. It can be such an [important] part of their lives. I do not know if there is any way of doing this without religion. I think there is an attempt at that [at Healing of Memories], but Christianity kept on coming out. Especially in the last bit where there were psalms and all that. I come from a non-religious background. ... There is such a mixed group of people there, there must be a way of working around that, of allowing religion to be included without offending other people, without imposing

it on people. For me, the moment that I get the feeling of something imposing on me I think: I do not want to hear this, I do not want to be involved. (L. B. 1999)

Meanwhile, other participants mention that they felt there was enough flexibility in the framework of the workshop to accommodate a variety of approaches to religious practice:

I am not religious but it was okay because I could choose to participate for example in the prayers or stay out. There was choice and also suggestion for input from us who were not so strong in religion and do not like the Christian things. (J.G. 2000)

A Once-off Encounter—Knowing that Things Could Be Different?

From respondents' mainly positive views, it seems that during the time of the weekend, the workshops provide a very engaging and intense experience. There were no explicitly negative voices on the process of the weekend itself in the sample group. When asked further for critical responses to the process, several participants mentioned that they found the workshop such a needed and rare space for reflection and meeting other South Africans that it "needs to be protected rather than slashed" (field notes 2000).

Many participants said that they did not manage to keep in touch with other participants after the workshop even though they had really wanted to do so at the end of the weekend. Some of the respondents managed to form meaningful relationships that continued beyond the weekend:

I have maintained some connection with the people. And they are somehow deeper than with others, more than your everyday relationships because you have been in an outside space where you shared something special. (J.G. 2000)

All the interviewees said that they would have liked to come to more follow-up events or attend more workshops:

I mean ultimately the best thing to do would be to go to a workshop like that where you could open up about those issues and keep on going to workshops with the same people until you have built a relationship. (C.K. 1999)

The respondents spoke of the fact that the weekend experience of community and the feeling of hope are not sustainable and wear off quickly after the workshop. At the same time, the notion of “knowing that it could be different” stays important:

The main thing for me about Healing of Memories was the emotional experience, the feeling of connection. I know it fades, but it is knowing that you can connect. Knowing that it happened is important. ... When you come away from the workshop you feel connected to everybody. But it does not stay. Still, you remember that feeling of how it was, and it counteracts the negative feelings of the present of separation and divisiveness. I can place myself back there and know that it can be different, place myself in the position of closeness to people, which counteracts that feeling of being outside. I do not even need to talk about these experiences [the past and the workshop]. I still know that I do not have to feel excluded. (J.G. 2000)

At the same time, the confrontation with a very different and unchanged South African reality after the workshop left some participants disillusioned:

Like me, I was in Gardens Centre once at Pick and Pay, when I saw this white young lady. I did not know where 'Musica' is there, so I asked her. I went to her wanting to ask where 'Musica' is. She just went like this (imitates gestures of disgust and rejection). I wanted to clap [hit] her! I was so angry. And I told her: 'Your mother taught you that we are baboons, did she?' So how can you change? Because these things are still happening. (Q.M. 1999)

Other respondents spoke to the fact that participants' serious material needs can put the positive workshop experience into question:

A.H. : When I left the workshop I was the happiest man in the world. But now that happiness becomes temporary because you go back to the very same situation of unemployment. So now it looks as if you have never done a workshop.

I : It is erased then, the whole experience?

A.H. : Ja, it is erased because you go back to the very same suffering, and it reminds you of the things again. My advice to all NGOs is that when they workshop these people, they must have an alternative [afterwards] asking where does this person want to go? And try to contact companies

and even government structures in order for that particular person to find employment.

Or if he wants to go back to school, that person must go back to school. (A.H. 1999)

This response speaks to the need for an integrated approach that addresses psychological, emotional, and spiritual needs (HOM's focus) as well as structural and material needs in order to facilitate a healing process. It points to the importance of networking and referrals in the context of a once-off intervention such as HOM. Otherwise, the workshops are in danger of leaving participants even more frustrated and disillusioned by an unchanged reality. In the specific context of offering HOM workshops as a service to survivors of apartheid violations, it is important to offer continued support and institute the process as part of a larger "package" of interventions.

Long-Term Engagement—Changing Practice

Those participants who described the workshop as having an impact that was in some way sustainable beyond the weekend have often attended more than one workshop or have become HOM facilitators. It was particularly the facilitators who spoke positively of a long-term process of personal transformation that the HOM process has initiated for them. While the majority of the respondents who attended only one workshop described the experience as a valuable memory that impacts on their thoughts and reflection, facilitators spoke of the influence on their behavior and the sense of understanding their daily experiences at a different level:

Other things happen outside of the workshop that have a bearing on being South African, and white and black and all that. I experience my healing every day, at home, on the train and at work here. I am confronted all the time with situations that remind me of who we are and where we come from. And without judging everybody else I feel that there are a lot of people who still have to start somewhere. I am confronted with that and I am glad that I have this to hold on to - to know that it is actually, unfortunately that way because of apartheid. It is not that people have decided to be like that. (R.M. 1999)

Facilitators also spoke of their learning how to create lasting and meaningful relationships within the mixed facilitator team and how the engagement with the HOM process enabled them to intervene successfully in conflict situations, especially in the workplace.

I do not know how I would have been able to work at X. also. Because of how racial differences are pronounced here and how, you know, institutionally we do not look after people in that way, say giving them information or taking them through training or just conscientizing them or things like that. So each person actually goes into racial groups, cliques, and what is worse into tribal cliques. I mean I do not have that. I do not see myself as having to belong to a clique, African clique or any kind of clique and here it is a huge deal. Even when somebody is being recruited for a high position, the first thing people will ask is 'What race?' ...

I am doing on a part time basis employment equity training, and you know, employment equity is about equity and bringing black people on board. I am faced with a large number of white males who feel threatened and are afraid and are fearful and are thinking of going to Perth, places like that all the time. And they are very hostile. I think for me it is not about the Employment Equity Act only, but it is also about being South African. And I think, a number of times I have actually moved out of the Act itself and engaged as a South African. And it has verified for them, I think, because they are looking at this African person who is coming to gloat, I think they think that because things are beneficial [for us now] My healing comes [and] presents itself, a situation presents itself to me a lot and I am happy that I have something [she speaks about the skills and experiences from HOM] to hold on to. ... And then at the end it is so wonderful because they always ask for my phone number (laughs). (R.M. 1999)

CREATING A SPACE? CHALLENGES AND POTENTIAL OF THE HOM PROCESS

HOM workshops provide a unique space of telling and listening, of witnessing one another across historical boundaries in South Africa. At the same time, it is bound to be a problematic space, which is reflected in participants' responses. By facilitating encounters between South Africans and creating multiple opportunities to speak about each other's life experiences, the workshops offer a space to see, feel, touch, and experience

one an-“other” without ignoring the barriers that the apartheid experience has created. Ideally, this encounter creates an awareness and respect for apartheid’s very real consequences. The many participants who have spoken about the experience of “touching a white person for the first time,” “sleeping next to a white person,” and “being hugged by a black person for the first time” affirmed that part of the power of HOM lies in the simple fact that it enables people to literally, physically, spend time together in the same space. This is still an unusual experience for many in a city like Cape Town where the majority of inhabitants continue to live and work in settings that do not easily allow for the crossing of the physical boundaries created by apartheid. In my reading of HOM, part of the potential for change that it offers workshop participants evolves around the idea of deconstructing racial boundaries and stereotypes through a form of testimonial dialogue.

Testimonial Dialogue

In creating a space for speaking memories to each other, the HOM offers what could be called an opportunity for “testimonial dialogue.” The sharing of experiences marks an act of *witnessing* each other as people and as South Africans consciously taking on the legacy of apartheid. In this sense, the small groups at the workshop can offer a different kind of testimonial space to the public platform that the TRC had instituted, a semi-public space marked by intimacy, anonymity, temporal limitation, and confidentiality. The approach that all South African stories can enter into this telling space is important in this regard. While who comes to the workshop and whose experiences are told is a self-selecting process, it makes room for dialogue about the past rather than placing testimony as a lone voice, speaking of “victims” isolated in their pain. It is a space that seeks to open the possibility for an exploration of the past rather than closing it. In this testimonial dialogue, it is initially the stories that begin to correspond with one another negotiating great differences through the common frame of one system that generated them. At the same time, participants discover often unexpected commonalities in each other’s stories and relate to one another through empathy and listening. This process often allows a conversation to develop that may otherwise have been prevented by psychological barriers.

It is interesting to note that in the course of the HOM discourse between 1995 and 2000, the importance of the concept of “truth” has

diminished. Whereas in the earlier documentation there is an emphasis on the need to “tell each other the truth” (HOM Facilitator’s Guidebook) and participants bring up the theme of truth, the term rarely appears at workshops after the TRC report was handed over. Rather HOM and participants place emphasis on a more integrative approach of listening to one another and of coming to terms with the continuities of the past in the present.

Enacting Conflict

The aim of a safe space is crucial to enable the particular kind of testimony that is spoken at the workshops. Yet HOM workshops are in a sense also “unsafe” spaces because of the immediate confrontation with each other’s accounts of the apartheid years. There is little room for distance in this personal act of witnessing one another. Many of the interviewees spoke to the fact that workshops are unsettling and that the formal framework of the workshop program was needed to deal with the fears and discomfort that are also part of the encounters. I would argue that this unsettling facet of encountering diversity, the notion of a space that may challenge comfort zones and passivity, is crucial to the dynamics of a collective healing process such as the one that HOM is aiming for. The storytelling in HOM, for instance, operates differently to processes that are offered by self-help groups for survivors because the setup may challenge people as much as it can console.

In this regard, one could read the HOM process as a possibility for a (non-violent) enactment of the conflicts and questions that emerge from an individual and mutual confrontation with the past. The majority of South Africans experience conflict as inherently negative, partly because in everyday life it is often enacted in violent ways and therefore not experienced as a productive force. The “normal” South African way of dealing with conflict involves avoidance and denial of the continuities of the past in the present, all of which operate as a basic underlying condition for modes of communication. The tensions that emerge from these continuous realities, as much as from the remembered hurts and traumata that affect South Africans, are visible in the displaced ways in which anger is played out at different levels of society, for example, in domestic violence, violent gang cultures, the brutality of criminal acts, and others. Could memory work such as the HOM process then serve to enable a more “healthy” enactment of conflict rather than preventing or containing it?

Common approaches in conflict resolution and peace work often emphasize that they are future-oriented and may not include or marginalize the impact of the past and the role that memories play in daily interactions. I suggest that interventions focusing on community peacebuilding and conflict resolution could enter into fruitful collaborations with processes such as HOM. In this sense, the dialogue about the past forms one element in the forming and transforming of relationships that are part of social healing.

Creating Community?

The Healing of Memories process can be read as an attempt at creating the possibility for a different enactment of community between South Africans in the sense of a “common-unity.” Former participants who spoke of the experience in terms of “being initiated into a new kind of South African-ness” emphasized that part of the process of transition to democracy should be that South Africans see themselves as creating a new nation. Yet there is a need among many to be affirmed as “having a place” in this new nation. For those who were only allowed to vote for the first time in 1994, it is an affirmation of belonging and ownership as much as it may be viewed as continued “permission” to belong for those who had to begin sharing the vote with the oppressed majority. This sense of belonging is crucial to people’s confident and positive enactment of citizenship on different levels, such as civil responsibility toward each other.

THOUGHTS FOR THE FUTURE

Making a Difference

No former participant has claimed that the workshop had no impact at all on his or her life. Even though many of the new qualities of interaction encountered at the workshop do not seem easy to sustain in the day-to-day reality of people’s lives, the workshop experience plays a role for most participants. There is a desire to “make a difference” in their families, communities, and society, albeit in a small way. Many asked if a process like HOM could not assist in facilitating a more active engagement in processes of change on a wider scope.

Opening the Wounds and Follow-Up

The remembering through storytelling can be a very intensive process that leads people to reconnect with the hurts and traumas they have experienced in the past. A participant describes it as “taking you apart and then you have to go back home and piece yourself together.” For a number of participants who were very traumatized, the suffering continues as they have experienced little change in their lives. Economic problems are most pressing. The HOM workshop has been a good experience for them, but they expressed the need for continued support, especially shortly after the weekend. The follow-up meeting four weeks after the workshop is meant to be for networking and reconnecting with the other participants, yet in practice most participants never see each other again after the workshops. Many of the interviewees mentioned that they would have benefited more from the process had there been a more sustained form of follow-up to the workshops in order to implement the new elements that the experience has offered to their lives. They also mentioned the need for the HOM process to go hand-in-hand with other empowerment and capacity-building interventions.

Creating Networks

Questions were also raised regarding whether HOM could provide a platform for dialogue around issues that were raised at the workshop. This could be very useful if it serves, at the same time, networking purposes through which former HOM participants can get in contact with other organizations and services. Such a continuous engagement could incorporate people who work in fields like conflict resolution, trauma work, empowerment groups, and others. These fields are often viewed separately as either “dealing with the past” or “focusing on the present.” They could dialogue in interesting ways since past and present coexist and interact visibly in grassroots interventions.

Support System for Facilitators

The experiences of those working with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s survivor narratives over a long period of time have shown that the impact of listening and attending to human pain is profound,

both positive and negative. The responses I received from long-term facilitators of Healing of Memories confirmed this. Facilitators described how they grappled with “the stories” they heard upon returning to their daily lives after a workshop. It is important for the sustainability of such a project to ensure a good support system and debriefing mechanisms for facilitators within the project.

Participant Target Groups

There has been some discussion in the project of widening the range of workshops that are offered within the Healing of Memories process, for example, to include a workshop for younger people who have not experienced apartheid in its immediacy. One could also assess the potential the process has in fields like education and in the workplace where people depend on establishing long-term relationships with each other despite historical differences and power imbalances.

These workshops would be likely to have a different emphasis, for example, in the context of improving work environments. They may be used to complement the “diversity workshops” that have become part of corporate practice in the “new” South Africa. However, it is more risky to “open up” in a situation where people have “histories” with each other and continue to be confronted with them in their daily lives. The question of follow-up processes may be even more crucial in this regard.

Important considerations center on the implications of the segregation of spaces in the larger Cape Town area. The question where HOM workshops and follow-ups are held and whether they could be moved closer or operate in disadvantaged communities has been asked repeatedly.

Documentation of People's Stories

Following the process of Healing of Memories, I have listened to a rich reservoir of stories about the apartheid years. In offering people who come to the workshops to later record and capture their stories (after the weekend), one could add significant volume to the body of narratives that has been created so far. This could go as far as the beginning of a small archive on the experiences apartheid generated in the Western Cape. In that HOM does not concentrate on a particular group of people, a unique opportunity offers itself to gain insight into the broad spectrum

of apartheid experiences and thus contribute to an understanding of the past and analysis of the apartheid system.

CONCLUSIONS BUT NO CLOSURE

The research on HOM has shown one facet of the South African way of dealing with the past. This report could only begin to explore the depth of understanding that such a process can offer with regard to people's experiences, thoughts, emotions, and beliefs during the apartheid years and in post-apartheid "new" South Africa. Further writings on Healing of Memories can contribute to the investigation of the complex interplay of motivations that drove people to their choices, actions, and reactions within a system that used a wide spectrum of political, cultural, psychological, economic, religious, and other forces to establish and maintain its power balances. In addition to the healing impact that can lie in the practice of telling and being listened to, I see the potential of an initiative that focuses on a once-off weekend experience in the idea of an encounter, driven by the wish to understand and realize each other as human beings, the wish that South Africans—connected to an inextinguishable past—can begin to see themselves and each other as individuals with a significant spectrum of choice in their daily lives. In creating a space for dialogue about personal memory and past and present experience lies the potential to create awareness, respect, and a sense of responsibility toward each other. This may often be an unsettling and difficult process, full of setbacks and disillusionment, but it is, nonetheless, a hopeful process that can lead to the beginning of a personal dialogue set against the pervasive physical and mental legacies of a racist system.

REFERENCES

Publications

Healing of Memories (1997) *Facilitators' Guidebook*

Kayser, Undine (1996–2000) Field Notes

Trauma Centre Chaplaincy (1996) *Annual Report* Institute for Healing of Memories (1999) *Annual Report* Healing of Memories (1998) promotional leaflet

Video Documentaries

Kayser, Undine (1998) *Down Memory Lane. A Day of Remembering District Six* (VHS, 40min.) available from CSVR

Healing of Memories (1996) Insert in: *Fokus*. Produced by Sylvia Vollenhofer.
Screened on December 2, 1996, SABC

Interviews

Participants (in person interviews by author; tape-recorded)

A.H. (1999, November 5) C. K. (1999, July 19)

J.G. (2000, May, notes)

L.L. (1999, May 24)

M.M. (1999, November 10)

N.S. (2000, January 26)

L.B. (1999, July 23)

Focus Group (1999, May 12)

Facilitators (in person interviews by author; tape recorded)

D.H. (1999, July 20)

B.B. (1999, February 15)

B.M (1999, July 26)

R.M. (1999, July 9)

Lapsley, Michael (1999, July 13; and 1999, July 27) Director, Institute for
Healing of Memories

NOTES

1. The meeting was held under the auspices of the Western Cape Province Council of Churches (WCPCC), the World Conference on Religion and Peace (WCRP), and other organizations.
2. For a separate report on the RR campaign, see: Kayser (2000) What do we tell our children? The work of the Centre for Ubuntu in Cape Town, CSVR. The reports are part of a forthcoming series of organizational case studies and analysis of post-TRC interventions.
3. The Trauma Centre at the time conducted a number of programs to meet the needs of survivors of violence in the Western Cape, among them were the "Torture and Captivity Project," "Refugees and Asylum Seekers," "Education and Training," "Advocacy," "Truth Commission Evaluation and Education," "Urban and Rural Violence," and "Returned Exiles."
4. This becomes evident in the documentation of communication between the Commission and the initiative and was also affirmed in interviews with former TRC staff.
5. In collaboration with the South African Council of Churches (SACC).
6. IHOM funding proposal 1999–2001.
7. My personal motivation for the study grew out of attending a Healing of Memories workshop in 1997. At the time, I was engaged in a study that compared German and South African strategies of remembering a past of atrocity. The first Healing of Memories weekend I took part in set

- me on a path of seeing my own, my family's, and my country's past in relation to the South African experience. This led to a fruitful exploration of the links between personal, communal, and official national histories, their role as narratives or stories, and the many ways in which they are enacted in practice. The report should be read against this background.
8. Note that the interventions may not see themselves as doing "reconciliation" work, but can be read within a framework of "reconciliation-related" interventions. Father Lapsley emphasized that HOM does not make use of the term "reconciliation" in its program anymore.
 9. In this regard, it is important to note that the Healing of Memories participants present a *self-selected sample* of South Africans who are motivated by a range of reasons to "deal with" the past. They may represent a minority.
 10. Available from the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation, Johannesburg.
 11. A different workshop model for younger South Africans between 15 and 18 years is being developed by the IHOM.
 12. The "Spear of the Nation," former military wing of the ANC.
 13. These themes are a selection of the ones that have come up most frequently at the workshops.
 14. In some workshops, the symbol is introduced as a "peace symbol."
 15. It is often a sad or lamenting song such as "Senze'nina" [What have we done?].
 16. Note that the HOM workshops and this concept were developed in 1995, before the TRC came into existence.
 17. The focus of the TRC had to be narrower due to its mandate that defined gross human rights violation as "the killing, abduction, torture or severe ill-treatment of any person ..." (TRC Report, Vol. 1, 1999, p. 60).
 18. Participants who have attended more than one workshop are the exception. The only participants who have regularly attended a number of workshops are the facilitators. In their interview responses, it becomes clear that a long-term engagement with the process has a significantly different impact on the once-off attendance of a workshop (see Impacts).
 19. Participants may attend a second workshop if requested, but further attendance is discouraged.
 20. Initially, there were several survivor groups for whom the HOM has offered two or more workshops.
 21. The term catharsis is not meant to necessarily imply closure here.
 22. Chaplaincy Report 1996.
 23. In some cases, in 1998, participants had misunderstood the HOM process as responsible for paying reparations, which created conflict at some workshops.
 24. This puts emphasis on the importance for networking and collaboration with other interventions. See: "thoughts for the future."

25. Some Healing of Memories facilitators apply this metaphor to the workshop when explaining the process of healing, and others do not use it. A number of my interviewees commented negatively on the Truth Commission in this regard, saying that it “opened wounds and left them unattended.”
26. This relates to many HOM participants mentioning that they found the reactions of perpetrators who testified to the TRC, their unwillingness to acknowledge and apologize, very disturbing and painful. HOM participants also spoke critically about the unwillingness of many white South Africans to engage with the past and to take responsibility for being beneficiaries of the apartheid system.
27. In post-apartheid South Africa, race remains a crucial marker to locate people’s voices. At the same time, projects like the Healing of Memories are working toward a deconstruction of apartheid’s essentialism in employing racial categories. Reading the Healing of Memories as a process that aims to question and put to test the boundaries of these categories, I have made the methodological decision not to re-impose racial categories on my respondents’ voices as a necessity, but rather to let the voices speak in their own context and the context of their experiences with Healing of Memories. This is not meant to deny the present impact of the former classifications or as a dislocation of people’s voices. Rather, it aims to let them speak from the point of complexity, ambivalence, self-questioning, and transformation.
28. It is important to note that the framework of the “telling space” prompts a particular version of participants’ life stories. When HOM refers to “the story,” it is not to negate the multiplicity of people’s life experiences and the many ways in which they can be told but to concentrate on what people present as “their story” on the respective weekend, to the respective participants in the small group. Facilitators and participants who have attended several workshops speak about their experiences of telling and re-telling whereby “the story” changes in aspect and detail.
29. All names have been changed.
30. The significance that participants assign to the political context varies, but it is relevant to read this evaluation of HOM and participants’ responses in the context of the Western Cape as the only province in South Africa under the governance of the Democratic Alliance (DA), a combination of the Democratic Party (DP) and the New National Party (NNP). Both parties’ constituencies represent mainly white and colored middle-class voters.
31. City planners during the apartheid era applied an effective concept of building “natural” boundaries into the structure of the apartheid city.

Highways and railway lines still mark the segregation of areas today, especially in Cape Town where the railway lines were used to divide so-called white from non-white areas.

32. In many white affluent communities, a fault line seems to exist around “buying in” or “buying out” of the new South Africa, taking part in the new society or considering emigration. In disadvantaged communities, new economic divides appear with the development of a rising middle class, and the persisting and widening divides between townships and suburbs.

APPENDIX II

TRAINING A NEW GENERATION OF PEACEBUILDERS

CONTACT

TRAINING A NEW GENERATION OF PEACEBUILDERS

By Paula Green

Director, CONTACT Summer Institute

School for International Training

Brattleboro, Vermont USA

Director, Karuna Center for Peacebuilding

Leverett, Massachusetts USA

Published in Peace and Change 2002

Published in New Routes 2000

© The Editor(s) (if applicable) and The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2021

N. A. Khan, *Educational Strategies for Youth Empowerment in Conflict Zones*, <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-66226-4>

Dr. Paula Green

Standing by helplessly as we watch our world devour itself in orgies of greed, hatred, abused power, and violence is more than many of us can bear. On all continents, members of war-torn communities and witnesses from afar feel called to respond to the conflicts plaguing our current era. The new field of *peacebuilding* has emerged, especially in response to post-Cold War, identity-based local and regional conflicts. With this emerging field arises the need to train peacebuilders, those who will carry out the work of conflict prevention and resolution in the next generation. CONTACT, an innovative and person-centered education and training program, is one such response.

Indeed, the post-Cold War era has witnessed an inordinate number of violent conflicts involving diverse cultural and religious groups, many of long duration and all resulting in extreme suffering, dislocation, and devastation of the bonds of community and decency. It will take decades to recover from the physical destruction and generations to heal from the seeds of betrayal, distrust, and hatred sown by intercommunal warfare.

When betrayal appears to be based on religious and cultural differences, a legacy of enmity passes from the generation of victims to their descendants. Holocaust research now reports the presence of secondary trauma among *third* generation families of survivors, which will likely be replicated among survivor families in other genocides. Less obvious but also documented is the suffering of perpetrators and their families, where guilt and shame, rage and revenge, or helplessness and isolation hinder recovery and may spark further intercommunal violence.

Many of us believe that the international community should assume responsibility for the prevention and healing of intercommunal conflict, for both altruistic and selfish reasons. A community at war is inherently unstable and dangerous, both for itself and the world. With the hundreds of wars fought in recent decades, we now face a global population of some 30-50 million refugees and an even larger and uncountable number of traumatized individuals and societies. Many of those traumatized by armed conflict are children, who will make decisions in the next generation. Decisions made by angry, aggrieved, disenfranchised, and abused populations will be neither rationale nor reconciling, but more likely vengeful and destructive. The cycles of interreligious and intercultural enmity will continue. Warfare, already dominant in the global mind, threatens to become further entrenched and glorified as the only

instrument to address religious and cultural grievances and to solve conflicts.

The international community has failed in its obligation to behave as a community of moral concern, not because it lacks the tools but because it seems to lack the will or the motivation to act beyond narrow self-interests. Furthermore, nation-states resist intervention in intrastate conflict, preferring agreements that keep the precedent of sovereignty inviolable, thus preventing third-party checks on intercommunal warfare.

BENEATH THE SURFACE OF RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL CONFLICTS

Although most conflicts involving culture and religion currently are fought within state boundaries, the roots of these conflicts extend beyond the nation-state to include the interests of external stakeholders. Interlocked sources of armed conflict such as unjust economic and political arrangements, massive arms trade, poverty, inequitable distribution of land, water, and other natural resources, failed post-colonial governments, centuries of exploitation, historical grievances, and misuse of power may be framed or misconstrued as conflicts of identity, religion, and culture.

Identity or religious and cultural differences seldom, if ever, *cause* armed conflict but are frequently exploited to foment conflict. Popular leaders may evoke sacred images or historical memories to incite violence, manipulating populations for private gain or glory and creating the *illusion* that religious or cultural differences are provoking war. Competition for scarce resources and at a deeper level greed, anger, fear, and misguided notions of separateness more likely underlie the causes of war. Religious or cultural fundamentalism may stimulate conflict, but fundamentalism often masks a deeper fear of annihilation, a sense troubling many cultural and religious groups today that global homogeneity, aggressive commercialism, and diminishing resources will displace their centuries-old practices and patterns of culture.

Religion, culture, ethnicity, and identity *per se* do not *cause* rampant intercommunal violence, but function rather as banners to which communities rally in the search for protection from complex and menacing forces of change. Applying the label of *identity-based conflict* masks the complex macro forces and deep existential fears confronting the human family. Thus, we understand the phrase *religious and cultural conflicts* to stand in for an aggregation of subterranean issues that fuel contemporary violence.

TRAINING FOR TRANSFORMATION

We come now to the issue of responding to our catastrophic global quandary. A full analysis of the sources of armed conflict or the possible responses lies beyond the scope of this paper. We will focus attention on one modest response to the problems of conflicting ethnic and religious communities: the training of Track Two peacebuilders within a multicultural, multireligious, and multiethnic learning environment.

What do we know about contact and prejudice? We know that cultural isolation breeds stereotypes and an exaggeration of the worst characteristics of the "other." Relationship reduces fear of difference and enables adversaries to meet each other beyond the prevailing distortions and mythologies that community members are taught to hold about particular "others." We have learned from Yugoslavia, however, that proximity does not prevent the reawakening of prejudices by cynical leadership.

While contact by itself offers an insufficient promise of intercommunal harmony or social responsibility, we know that we can inoculate against some hatreds and prejudices through exposure. Although relationship does not guarantee a contract of equity or social justice, it is often a precondition for social change, a task much harder to manage in the abstract, without living beings representing themselves and their needs. Furthermore, contact is essential to communication and thus to creating, managing, and maintaining peace agreements. We often refer to this as *social peacebuilding*.

Many of us engaged in the training of peacebuilders have witnessed remarkable transformation among participants in multicultural educational settings. In the best of circumstances, participants in training experience empathy, build loyalties across differences, and forge a genuine culture of peace, foreshadowing a future we hope they will strive to create. Replicating these transformational experiences within training settings and beyond the educational environment can create opportunities for adversaries to build the trust and alliances essential to resolving conflicts.

We would thus ideally seek to educate large numbers of peacebuilders who understand the causes and complexities of contemporary conflict and who have attained a sufficient level of self-insight, multicultural competence, and functional skills. Peacebuilders would be able to work with communities in conflict to separate real from imagined threats, develop constituencies to support change, and facilitate mutual problem solving.

Conflict Resolution, a new and burgeoning academic field, has already emerged to help guide our comprehension of and response to the rising tide of ethnic violence in the post-Cold War world. *Conflict Transformation* moves the field to an even more demanding threshold of application and practice, aiming at the development in the individual of an inclusive sense of community that embraces the “other,” as well as learning strategies to change unjust systems and oppressive structures.

Conflict transformation education seeks to educate peacebuilders who will influence their own communities, work cross-culturally with the identified “other” in their region, and/or serve globally in conflict prevention and management through governments, non-government organizations, religious and secular institutions, the academy, media, the private sector, and elsewhere. *Their training should be relationship-focused, process-oriented, self-reflective, and empathic.* Such education would support self-awareness, inner development, skill building, and theoretical understanding of the characteristics and structural sources of war and violence within conflict-habituated regional, national, and global systems.

Self-awareness or consciousness involves recognizing and monitoring the flow of thoughts and emotions in the mind so that one’s behavior is ethical, principled, and clear rather than dictated by negative thought-forms or conditioned feelings. Skill building includes learning competencies beneficial to managing conflicts, such as multicultural communication expertise, dialogue and group facilitation, problem solving, consensus process, negotiation, and mediation. Conflict theory includes: understanding the multiple and interrelated sources of contemporary armed conflict; developing the ability to analyze the needs and motivations of stakeholders in a particular conflict region; recognizing repetitive cycles of vengeance or escalation in deep-rooted conflict systems; and using these analytic tools to apply appropriate and timely interventions to prevent or check violence and warfare.

Training for peacebuilders currently follows two compatible and overlapping models: an international focus with a mixed group or a local/regional focus designed to prevent or ameliorate armed conflict within a specific locality. The latter encourages relationship-building among conflictants within the region and develops objectives and strategies for intervention based on the local context. International training for peacebuilders offers a more broad, generic framework which participants can apply to their own local and regional armed conflicts, and the

possibility of escape from parochial prejudices to a more universal world-view. Successful programs in international training include Responding to Conflict in England and Eastern Mennonite University's Summer Peacebuilding Institute and the School for International Training's CONTACT Program, both in the United States.

International conflict transformation education should be offered in various locations around the world, facilitated by international teams of seasoned peacebuilders who themselves come from diverse cultural communities and have wide experience in conflict regions. The trainers would ideally create a learning environment where adult participants from a broad range of religious, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds can share their experiences, feelings, and beliefs in safety and mutual respect. Training designs should reflect varied, culturally sensitive conflict resolution practices, encouraging indigenous modalities as well as Western-developed models. Healing and reconciliation, prejudice-reduction, tolerance toward unfamiliar views, experimentation with new behaviors, and recognition of the violence and hatred within our own hearts should be part of a transforming curriculum.

We can identify several overlapping needs in the field: to *prevent* further outbreaks of inter-ethnic conflict throughout the world, to *heal* individuals from the enmity and trauma of communal violence, and to *reconcile* shattered communities so that a shared future might be possible. To be effective leaders in conflict prevention, healing, and reconciliation, peacebuilders must enter their own process of recovery, healing, and reconciliation, know themselves deeply, meet the "other," and guard against the tendencies toward enmity and separation that plague the human mind.

Without exposure to perceived "enemies," without awareness training and attentiveness, and despite good cognitive education, those who seek to build peace without pacifying their own hearts may compound the problem and perhaps fall short of embracing a more inclusive and tolerant model of human relations. "*All humankind is one*" is an easy truth to speak, but a difficult ethic to live. For transformative peacebuilding education, the experience of our kinship and our common ground must be lived and internalized. Personal healing, inner transformation, and interpersonal experience with other conflict survivors across cultures are as crucial in this field as theoretical knowledge and skills development.

Testing the Model

My convictions are borne out of my experience at the School for International Training in the United States where we developed a program called CONTACT, or Conflict Transformation Across Cultures. In June 2000, we welcomed our fourth annual class, 80 participants over a four-week period from all continents, approximately 30 countries and most of the world's major religious traditions. Participants ranged in age from 20s to 70s and represented a variety of professions, including law, education, social work, NGO management, academics, psychology, religion, engineering, and business. In many cases, our students came from opposing sides of a conflict, such as Israelis, Palestinians, Serbs, Croats, Macedonians, and Bosnians from the Yugoslav Successor States, Sri Lankan Tamils and Sinhalese, and Armenians and Azerbaijanis from the Caucasus.

Our core course for peacebuilders became an interactive laboratory where group members explored their differences, investigated their impulses toward violence and revenge, tested their beliefs, exposed their wounds, and aired their religious and cultural worldviews. Community building facilitated understanding, multicultural sensitivity, and healing. Participants marveled continually at their ability and inclination to make friends with the "other," be that other a culturally perceived "enemy" or someone of different race, culture, religion, geographic origin, gender, or sexual orientation. It was of high significance to a Bosnian Muslim that his best friend during the course was an Armenian Christian. A religious Muslim found it critical to engage in intense conversation with a lesbian on issues of homosexuality. South Africans from across the racial divide co-facilitated a discussion on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, not in complete agreement but in a working partnership. German and Jewish participants encountered their historic link in an exercise on reconciliation, while Palestinians and Israelis as well as former Yugoslavs committed to joint future work. A Macedonian woman, in tears of grief and relief, told the group that she had found for the first time the friends she had lost in the Balkan Wars.

Students learned that the "other" is not the enemy. *The enemy is injustice and structural violence, which in turn is rooted in negative, fear-based human qualities we share, such as greed, malice and selfishness.* Participants saw that suffering occurs on both sides of a conflict, among victims and also among perpetrators. Group members learned to contextualize their own conflict within a world caught in an orgy of violence and enmity,

not isolated, random, or without cause. They felt less alone with their pain, less reactive, more concerned with the universal human endeavor to reach beyond differences. They learned to see their lives in the context of a universal tragedy of ethnic warfare currently tearing apart the world. Their suffering became the material of learning and transformation.

Our tasks as facilitators included monitoring the cognitive, affective, and skill-building dimensions of the course, maintaining the focus, introducing learning materials, retrieving theories from direct experience, and constantly building a container large and fluid enough to embrace the vast differences of our learning community. Throughout the core course and the electives, we created a *culture of peace*, providing an opportunity and a model, the first for many participants, to manage the tension between diversity and homogeneity, accepting genuine difference while maintaining harmony in a multicultural community. Intimate exposure to people of such diversity offered liberation from the blinding confines of particular tragedies into an understanding of conflict at once more relative and universal. A palpable spirit of peace stimulated an outflow of empathy and compassion.

Shifts in attitude and behavior cannot be “taught” intellectually; they are learned through encounter. We observed religious, racial, and ethnic stereotypes and prejudices replaced by genuine relationships. New friends from radically different cultures and religions provided a means of escape from the absolutism in one’s own background. Hardbound ideologies shifted. Impacted, intractable ideas and beliefs became softer. Participants within their own setting have a difficult time seeing their ethnic conflict through a wider lens. Group pressure often keeps them frozen in “us/them” paradigms. However, these same participants, released from the constriction of polarization by the presence of an international community, more readily unfreeze, shift, and universalize.

Fifty group members from twenty-five countries in a core course in peacebuilding cannot build authentic relationships without conflict, especially when that group includes so many who are considered “other” by virtue of their membership in a different religion, culture, class, or global region. The group practiced skills of conflict transformation through interpersonal and intergroup conflicts, learned cross-cultural communication through trial and error, managed vastly diverse political and religious viewpoints, and experienced healing and reconciliation directly with each other, later extrapolating each of these lessons to build theory and application.

We felt the effect of war trauma on classmates and lived with each other's suffering and broken hearts. The fragility of many group members fostered our understanding that recovery from war evolves slowly and that the movement toward reconciliation is long and arduous. Particular conflict arose for this group around a spectrum exercise on issues of violence and nonviolence. Many who had directly experienced the threat or the actuality of armed conflict or interpersonal violence felt conflicted about nonviolence as a feasible theoretical moral choice for peacebuilders. A heartfelt process of conflict transformation followed as group members revealed biographical histories that continue to shape ethical dilemmas and strategic decisions.

THE JOURNEY FORWARD

Before they returned to their own communities, the CONTACT group established Internet communication to encourage exchange of information and future shared projects. Additionally, for the first time in 2000, CONTACT began a yearlong distance learning program, which will provide more cognitive learning and an exposure trip to a region in conflict for twenty students motivated to acquire more academic knowledge of the field.

We know these peacebuilders return to families and colleagues who have not changed as they have in their month of training. Many face an arduous reentry journey to very different circumstances, including war-ravaged and divided communities, cultural isolation, and entrenched hopelessness. Transitioning from the heights of a bonded peacebuilding community to meet colleagues who have been deprived of such liberating experiences can create loneliness and a sense of futility and defeat.

However, group members, who have risked and encountered each other at deep levels, celebrated and grieved together, and experienced a peace-able community, have savored an undreamed-of reality. A vision of the possible has been seen. Unity has been discovered in the midst of difference and turmoil. Dissension has been managed; conflict has not resulted in loss or violence, in hatred or disconnection. These seeds of peace will not be neglected. Something new will grow through their skills, their confidence, and their transformation.

As I communicate with former participants around the world, I hear about their commitments and engagement. A Sri Lankan professor now facilitates inter-ethnic dialogue for local politicians. A Palestinian NGO

leader developed a bi-communal youth camp. An American offers psychological skills for trauma counseling in Bosnia. An Armenian has designed her Ph.D. studies to bridge peacebuilding and economics.

LOYALTY TO LIFE ITSELF

We need to honor their efforts by increasing the number of self-reflective, deeply engaged peacebuilders worldwide, supporting their ongoing development, nurturing their initiatives, and linking them in an interconnected web. Our troubled world could use an “army” of peacebuilders. Those of us in the forefront of education and training, who hope our work might prevent future violent conflicts, need the visible and tangible advocacy of esteemed international leaders such as Nobel Peace Laureates to endorse, encourage, and invigorate the training and education of peacebuilders.

Our survival depends on a significant portion of the human race accomplishing a change in worldview, from one of patriotic and tribal loyalties to loyalty to life itself.

Dr. Paula Green is the Founder and Co-Director of CONTACT and a Professor at the School for International Training in Brattleboro, Vermont, USA.

She is also the Founder-Director of Karuna Center for Peacebuilding, a Massachusetts-based NGO working in conflict transformation and reconciliation with war-torn and war-threatened communities worldwide.

For more information: www.sit.edu/conflict and www.karunacenter.org.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abraham, Bobins. "Providing Shelters and Organizing Langar, How Sikh Community Is Helping Delhi Riot Victims." *Indiatimes.com*, 2 March 2020, www.indiatimes.com/amp/news/india/providing-shelter-and-organizing-langar-this-is-how-sik-community-is-helping-delhi-riot-victims-507371.html. Accessed 8 August 2020.
- Ahmad, Aijaz. *Lineages of the Present: Contemporary South Asia: Ideology and Politics in Contemporary South Asia*. New York: Verso, 2002.
- Alexander, Jeffrey C. Interview by Ajay Gudavarthy. *NewsClick.in*. News Click, 11 July 2020, <https://www.newsclick.in/GlobalRise-of-Right-Wing-Populism-Modi-Cultural-Sociology>. Accessed 22 August. 2020.
- . "Toward a Theory of Cultural Trauma." In *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*. Edited by Jeffrey C. Alexander, Ron Eyerman, Bernhard Giesen, Neil Smelser, and Piotr Sztompka. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004: 1–30.
- Alhawasi, Nourah Abdullah M. Message to Nyla Ali Khan. 9 July 2020. E-mail.
- American Psychiatric Association. *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*. 3rd ed. Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Association, 1980.
- . *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*. 4th ed. Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Association, 1994.
- Anderson, Tonnia. Message to Nyla Ali Khan. 4 September 2020. E-mail.
- Annas, Julia. "Women and the Quality of Life." In *The Quality of Life*. Edited by Martha C. Nussbaum and Amartya Sen. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993: 279–296.
- Ashplant, Timothy G. et al. "The Politics of War Memory and Commemoration: Contexts, Structures and Dynamics." In *Commemorating War: The Politics of*

- Memory*. Edited by Ashplant, T. G., Graham Dawson, and Michael Roper. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 2000: 3–85.
- Ball, Karyn. “Trauma and Its Institutional Destinies.” In *Introduction. Trauma and Its Cultural Aftereffects*. Edited by Karyn Ball. Special issue of *Cultural Critique*, vol. 46, Fall 2000: 1–44.
- Bargen, Catherine. “Revival of Indigenous Justice in Canada, U. S., Should Be Compass for Restorative Justice.” *youthtoday.org*, Youth Today, 26 February 2018. <http://youthtoday.org/2018/02/revival-indigenous-justice-canada-u-s-compass-restorative-justice>. Accessed 26 August 2019.
- Barnes, Robert C. Message to Nyla Ali Khan. 25 August 2020. Telephonic Conversation.
- Berlant, Lauren. “The Subject of True Feeling: Pain, Privacy, and Politics.” In *Traumatizing Theory: The Cultural Politics of Affect in and Beyond Psychoanalysis*. Edited by Karyn Ball. New York: Other, 2007: 305–347.
- Bettelheim, Bruno. *Surviving and Other Essays*. New York: Knopf, 1979.
- Birla, Puja. “CBSC Tells Its Schools: Don’t Teach, Don’t Discuss the Following.” In *The Assault on History*. Delhi: Sahmat, Safdar Hashmi Memorial Trust, 2002: 35–36.
- Brown, Laura S. *Cultural Competence in Trauma Therapy: Beyond the Flashback*. Washington: American Psychological Association, 2008.
- Buckmaster, Claudia. Message to Nyla Ali Khan. 25 June 2020. E-mail.
- Burns, Kelly. Message to Nyla Ali Khan. 14 June 2019. E-mail.
- Butler, Judith. *Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable?* London: Verso, 2009.
- “CAA ‘Legal, Can’t Be Questioned Before Court’: Center to Supreme Court.” *NDTV.com*. NDTV, 17 March 2020, <https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/citizenship-amendment-act-caa-perfectly-legal-constitutional-can't-be-questioned-before-the-court-gov-2196141>. Accessed 9 August 2020.
- Chafe, William, Raymond Gavins, and Robert Korstad. eds. *Remembering Jim Crow: African Americans Tell About Life in the Segregated South*. New York: New York Press, 2014.
- Chaudhuri, Pooja, and Pratik Sinha. “PM Modi’s Speech on CAA/NRC: A Combination Falsehoods and Half-Truths.” *altnews.in.*, Alt News, 24 December 2019, <https://www.altnews.in/pm-modis-speech-on-caa-nrc-a-combination-of-falsehoods-and-half-truths/>. Accessed 4 January 2020.
- Chakma, Suhas. “The Economic Cost of Draft NRC: Poor Made Extremely Poor.” *rightsrisks.org*, Rights and Risks Analysis Group, 27 August 2019, <http://www.rightsrisks.org/press-release/the-economic-cost-of-draft-nrc-poor-made-extremely-poor/?fbclid=IwAR3U79CTL1Xw6JiRjQWhn8xoDovrXNrp9l658imIXF59N4KuLk77gIIwCB8>. Accessed 1 October 2019.
- Chatterjee, Chandra. *Surviving Colonialism: A Study of R.K. Narayan, Anita Desai, V.S. Naipaul*. Belgium: Universiteit Antwerpen, 2000.
- Chang, Suzette. Message to Nyla Ali Khan. 6 August 2020. E-mail.

- Coalition For Work With Psycho-Trauma & Peace (CWWPP)*. www.cwwpp.org. Accessed 1 July, 2020.
- Craps, Stef. *Postcolonial Witnessing: Trauma Out of Bounds*. Belgium: Ghent University, 2013.
- Davis, L. M., Steele, J. L., Bozick, R., Williams, M., Turner, S., Miles, J. N., Saunders, J., and Steinberg, P. S. *How Effective Is Correctional Education, and Where Do We Go from Here? The Results of a Comprehensive Evaluation*. Rand Corporation, 2014, www.file:///C:/Users/Nyla/AppData/Local/Temp/RAND%20Report-1.pdf. Accessed 2 September 2020.
- “Delhi Riots: Hindu Man Saves Six Muslim Neighbors from Torched House, Struggles with Severe Burns.” *Newindianexpress.com*. The New India Express, 29 February 2020, <https://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/delhi/2020/feb/29/delhi-riots-hindu-man-saves-six-muslim-neighbours-from-torched-house-struggles-with-severe-burns-2110368.html>. Accessed 1 March 2020.
- Dower, John W. *Cultures of War: Pearl Harbor, Hiroshima, 9–11, Iraq*. New York: W.W.Norton, 2010.
- Edkins, Jenny. *Trauma and the Memory of Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Fanon, Frantz. *Black Skin, White Masks*. Translated by Charles Lam Markmann. New York: Grove, 1967.
- Fassin, Didier, and Richard Rechtman. *The Empire of Trauma: An Inquiry into the Condition of Victimhood*. Translated by Rachel Gomme. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009.
- Feldman, Allen. “Memory Theatres, Virtual Witnessing and the Trauma-Aesthetic.” *Biography* 27 no. 1, 2004. *Project MUSE*. 23 January 2008. <http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/biography/v027.1feldman.html>.
- Felman, Shoshana, and Dori Laub. *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History*. New York: Routledge, 1992.
- Firestone, Tirzah. “Trauma Legacies in the Middle East.” *Tikkun Magazine* 29 no. 3, 2014: 6–10.
- Frankl, Viktor E. *Man’s Search for Meaning*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2006.
- . *The Will to Meaning: Foundations and Applications of Logotherapy*. New York: Plume, 2014.
- Friese, Kai. “Hijacking India’s History.” *New York Times* December 30. 2002: sec. A: 17.
- Green, Paula. Message to Nyla Ali Khan. 16 September 2020. E-mail.
- Gudavarthy, Ajay. Message to Nyla Ali Khan. 29 August 2020. E-mail.
- Guha, Ranajit. “On Some Aspects of the Historiography of Colonial India.” In *Subaltern Studies I: Writings on South Asian History and Society*. Edited by Ranajit Guha. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1982: 1–8.

- Hamilton, Carrie. "Activist Memories: The Politics of Trauma and the Pleasure of Politics." In *The Future of Memory*. Edited by Richard Crownshaw, Jane Kilby, and Anthony Rowland. New York: Berghahn, 2010: 265–278.
- Harris Betty J. Message to Nyla Ali Khan. 15 July 2020. E-mail.
- Hashimoto, Akiko. *The Long Defeat: Cultural Trauma, Memory, and Identity in Japan*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015.
- Hecker, Margarete. "Family Reconstruction in Germany." In *The Collective Silence: German Identity and the Legacy of Shame*, edited by Heimannsberg, Barbara and Christoph J. Schmidt. Translated by Cynthia Oudejans Harris and Gordon Wheeler. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1993: 73–93.
- Heimannsberg, Barbara, and Christoph J. Schmidt, eds. *The Collective Silence: German Identity and the Legacy of Shame*. Translated by Cynthia Oudejans Harris and Gordon Wheeler. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1993.
- Huyssen, Andreas. *Present Pasts Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003.
- The Institute for Healing of Memories*. <http://www.healing-memories.org>. Accessed 12 April 2019.
- Janhoff-Bulman, R. *Shattered Assumptions: Toward a New Psychology of Trauma*. New York: Free Press, 1992.
- Jayal, Niraja Gopal. "The CAA and NRC Together Will Reopen Wounds of Partition and Turn India into a Majoritarian State." *Scroll.in.*, Scroll, 29 December 2019, <https://scroll.in/article/947458/the-caa-and-nrc-together-will-reopen-wounds-of-partition-and-turn-india-into-a-majoritarian-state>. Accessed 10 February 2020.
- Jha, Prem Shankar. "The Struggle for India's Democracy Is Only Just Beginning," *the wire.in.*, The Wire, 31 December 2019, <https://thewire.in/rights/narendra-modi-ramlila-maidan-rss-police-protests>. Accessed 1 January 2020.
- Johnson, Hannibal. *Acres of Aspiration: The All-Black Towns in Oklahoma*. Austin, TX: Eakin Press, 2002.
- Kadam, Sanchita. "27 Deaths Later, It's Time to Wake Up: Assam and the Detention Camps Menace Claims 27 Lives Till Date," *cjp.org*, CJP: Defending Human Rights in the Courts and Beyond, 4 November 2019, https://cjp.org.in/27-deaths-later-its-time-to-wake-up/?fbclid=IwAR2AKPqDtIZ_PorhVWK3_nRuehHa5OCM5ycm3Fa7heS_-u9LpcfeAI2GI30. Accessed 10 November 2019.
- Kanda, Alphonse. "Argument for Logotherapy in a Rural South Africal Setting." *The International Forum for Logotherapy* 38, 2015, 20–23.
- . Message to Nyla Ali Khan. 9 July 2020; 10 August 2020. E-mail.
- Keefe, Patrick Radden. *Say Nothing*. New York: Doubleday, 2019.
- Khan, Nyla Ali. "The BJP Is Not India; and Every Indian Is Not a Modi-Devotee." *counterpunch.org*, CounterPunch, 18 February 2020, <https://>

- www.counterpunch.org/2020/02/18/the-bjp-is-not-india-and-every-indian-is-not-a-modi-devotee/. Accessed 19 June 2020.
- . “Discourse of Nationalisms in South Asia.” *counterpunch.org*, CounterPunch, 31 July 2017, <https://www.counterpunch.org/2017/07/31/discourse-of-nationalisms-in-south-asia/>. Accessed 15 August 2018.
- . “A Dynamic World Requires Inclusion and Diversity.” *dailytimes.com*, Daily Times, 8 January 2019, <https://dailytimes.com.pk/341648/a-dynamic-world-requires-inclusion-and-diversity/>. Accessed 2 April 2020.
- . “Economic and Emotional Rehabilitation of Women in Kashmir.” *dailytimes.com*. Daily Times, 10 February 2019, <https://dailytimes.com.pk/353055/economic-and-emotional-rehabilitation-of-such-women-in-kashmir/>. Accessed 15 August 2020.
- . “Education of Change.” *greaterkashmir.com*. Greater Kashmir, 28 December 2015, <https://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/opinion/the-education-of-change/>. Accessed 15 April 2020.
- . “Erasing Indigenous History of Kashmir.” *newagebd.net*, NewAge, 3 January 2020, <https://www.newagebd.net/article/95415/erasing-indigenous-history-of-kashmir>. Accessed 2 September 2020.
- . “Extremism Is the Bane of Our Existence.” *counterpunch.org*, CounterPunch, 22 April 2016, <https://www.counterpunch.org/2016/04/22/extremism-is-the-bane-of-our-existence/>. Accessed 20 June 2020.
- . “For Once Ask Not What Kashmir Can Do For You; Ask What You Can Do For Kashmir.” *sacw.net*, South Asian Citizens Web, 26 April 2016, <http://www.sacw.net/article12636.html>. Accessed 31 August 2020.
- . “Jonathan Tropper’s *This is Where I Leave You*,” Series “Let’s Talk About it, Oklahoma,” Mabel Bassett Women’s Maximum Security Prison, McCloud, Oklahoma. 6 April 2018. Lecture.
- . “Harper Lee’s *To Kill A Mockingbird*,” Series “Crime and Punishment,” Mabel Bassett Women’s Maximum Security Prison, McCloud, Oklahoma, 24 August 2018. Lecture.
- . “Homogenizing India: The Citizenship Debate.” *counterpunch.org*, CounterPunch, 11 December 2019, <https://www.counterpunch.org/2019/12/11/homogenizing-india-the-citizenship-debate/>. Accessed 11 December 2019.
- . “Impact of Kashmir Atrocities on Women.” *dailytimes.com*. Daily Times, 1 May 2018. <https://dailytimes.com.pk/234364/impact-of-kashmir-atrocities-on-women/>. Accessed 30 June 2020.
- . “India Is Gradually Leaning Toward a Dangerous Unitarianism.” *counterpunch.org*, CounterPunch, 18 December 2019, <https://www.counterpunch.org/2019/12/18/india-is-gradually-leaning-toward-a-dangerous-unitarianism/>. Accessed 18 December 2019.

- . "In Kashmir, Extremism Is the Real Enemy." *dailytimes.com*, Daily Times, 23 April 2017, <https://dailytimes.com.pk/15519/in-kashmir-extremism-is-the-real-enemy/>. Accessed 30 August 2020.
- . "An Interventionist Foreign Policy Blurs the Line of Demarcation Between Neoconservatives and Neoliberals." *counterpunch.org*. CounterPunch, 25 August 2017. <https://www.counterpunch.org/2017/08/25/an-interventionist-foreign-policy-blurs-the-line-of-demarcation-between-neoconservatives-and-neoliberals/>. Accessed 30 August 2020.
- . *Islam, Women, and Violence in Kashmir: Between India and Pakistan*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.
- . *The Life of a Kashmiri Woman: Dialectic of Resistance and Accommodation*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.
- . "Nation-Building and Conflict-Resolution." 3rd Annual Soch Columbia Pakistan Symposium: "Rethinking Partition: The Quest for Jinnah's Nation": "Imagining Kashmir: Finding the Country Without a Post Office." Columbia University, 31 March 2018. Presentation.
- . *Parchment of Kashmir: History, Society, and Polity*, ed. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.
- . "Peace and Resolution of Conflict," International Peace Day Observance, Organized by the United Nations Association of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma State Capitol, Oklahoma City, 21 September 2017. Lecture.
- . "Realpolitik Relegates Human Rights to the Background." *counterpunch.org*, CounterPunch, 24 October 2018, <https://www.counterpunch.org/2018/10/24/realpolitik-relegates-human-rights-to-the-background/>. Accessed 29 August 2020.
- . "Revitalization of Federalism and Restoration of Civil Rights in Kashmir." Oklahoma Bar Association at the Joint Meeting of the Holloway, Ginsberg, and Turner Inns of Court, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, 15 January 2020. Lecture.
- . "Revival of Democratic and Civil Society Institutions in Jammu and Kashmir." *kashmirtimes.com*, Kashmir Times, 26 April 2020, <http://www.kashmirtimes.com/newsdet.aspx?q=101575>. Accessed 31 August 2020.
- . "Robert M. Pirsig's *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*," Mabel Bassett Women's Maximum Security Prison, McCloud, Oklahoma, 17 May 2019. Lecture.
- . "Seeking Solomon's Wisdom: Reflections of a Daughter of Kashmir from the Land of Oklahoma." *counterpunch.org*, CounterPunch, 7 January 2020, <https://www.counterpunch.org/2020/01/07/seeking-solomons-wisdom-reflections-of-a-daughter-of-kashmir-from-the-land-of-oklahoma/>. Accessed 15 August, 2020.
- . "Without a Sense of Caring, There Can Be No Community." *rjcb.org*, RJCB Foundation, 7 November 2018. Accessed 3 September 2020.

- Khan, Sakina Yusuf and Sujata Dutta Sachdeva. "Has the Talibanization of Education Begun." In *The Assault on History*. Delhi: Sahmat, Safdar Hashmi Memorial Trust, 2002: 51–53.
- Kumar, Krishna. *Prejudice and Pride: School Histories of the Freedom Struggle in India and Pakistan*. Delhi: Penguin, 2001.
- LaCapra, Dominick. *History and Its Limits: Human, Animal, Violence*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998.
- . *Writing History, Writing Trauma*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001.
- Langsley, Michael. Message to Nyla Ali Khan, 17 August 2020. E-mail.
- Lin, Nancy J., and Karen L. Suyemoto. "Bridging the Broken Narrative: How Student-Centered Teaching Contributes to Healing the Wounds of Trauma." In *Asian American Voices: Engaging, Empowering, Enabling*. Edited by Lin Zhan. New York: National League for Nursing, 2009: 123–145.
- McCann, I. L., and Pearlman, L. A. "Vicarious Traumatization: A Framework for Understanding the Psychological Effects of Working with Victims." *Journal of Traumatic Stress* 3, 1990: 131–149.
- McCammon, Susan L. "Painful Pedagogy: Teaching About Trauma in Academic and Training Settings." In *Secondary Traumatic Stress: Self-Care Issues for Clinicians, Researchers, and Educators*. Edited by B. Hudnall Stamm. Maryland: Sidran Press, 1995: 105–120.
- Misri, Krishna. Message to Nyla Ali Khan. 9 July 2020. E-mail.
- Mojzes, Paul. Message to Nyla Ali Khan. 17 July 2020. E-mail.
- Mollica, Richard. *Healing Invisible Wounds: Paths to Hope and Recovery in a Violent World*. Orlando, FL: Policy: Harcourt, 2006.
- Nancy J. Lin, Karen L. Suyemoto, and Peter Nien-chu Kiang. "Education as Catalyst for Intergenerational Refugee Family Communication About War and Trauma." *Communication Disorders Quarterly* 30 no. 4, 2009: 195–207.
- Nandy, Ashis. Message to Nyla Ali Khan. 6 August 2020. E-mail.
- NCERT. *Contemporary India* (social science, class X). "New Educational to Help in Digital Transformation Strategy: IAMAI." *Times of India*, 30 July, 2020.
- Noda, Masaaki. *Saserareru kyōiku, tozetsusuru kyōshitachi*. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2002.
- Nussbaum, Martha C. *The Clash Within: Democracy, Religious Violence, and India's Future*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007.
- Okana, Kaori, and Motonori Tsuchiya. *Education in Contemporary Japan: Inequality and Diversity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- The Parents-Circle Families Forum (PCFF). https://www.theparentscircle.org/en/about_eng/. Accessed 12 July 2020.
- Ramphela, Mamphela, and Linda Richter. "Migrancy, Family Dissolution, and Fatherhood." In *Baba: Men and Fatherhood in South Africa*. Pretoria, South

- Africa: HSRC Press, 2006: 73–81. *The Respect Diversity Foundation*. www.respectdiversity.org. Accessed 1 January 2018.
- Sachdeva, Vakasha. “‘It’s Frightening’: Judges, UN Experts on Targeting CAA Protestors.” *Quint.com*, The Quint, 16 July 2020, <http://www.google.com/amp/s/www.thequint.com/amp/story/news/india/frightening-targeting-of-anti-caa-protestors-cases-police-retired-judges-un-experts-s-darapuri-lokur-shah>. Accessed 9 August 2020.
- Said, Edward. *Culture and Imperialism*. New York: Knopf, distributed by Random House, 1991.
- Salm, Heidi. “I Too Took Part: Confrontations with One’s Own History in Family Therapy.” In *The Collective Silence: German Identity and the Legacy of Shame*. Edited by Heimannsberg, Barbara and Christoph J. Schmidt. Translated by Cynthia Oudejans Harris and Gordon Wheeler. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1993: 49–60.
- Saunders, Rebecca. *Lamentation and Modernity in Literature, Philosophy, and Culture*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.
- “Secularism, Caste Under Axed Topics as CBSE Reduces Syllabus.” *Quint.com*, The Quint, 8 July 2020, <https://www.thequint.com/news/education/cbse-cuts-citizenship-democracy-secularism-chapters-from-class-11-syllabus>. Accessed 6 August 2020.
- Sigal, J. et al. “Some Second-Generation Effects of Survival of the Nazi Persecution.” Paper presented at the World Congress of Psychiatry, Mexico City. November 28–December 4, 1971.
- Sinha, Bhadra. “‘Proviso in Amended Citizenship Legislation Is Unconstitutional’: Justice Madan Lokur.” *hindustantimes.com*, Hindustan Times, 23 December 2019. <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/proviso-in-amended-citizenship-legislation-is-unconstitutional-justice-madan-lokur/story-sgh0kvlDkeKk4gdv4WzzXK.html>. Accessed 1 January 2020.
- Shankar, Soumya. “India’s Citizenship Law, in Tandem With National Registry, Could Make BJP’s Discriminatory Targeting of Muslims Easier.” *theintercept.com*, The Intercept, 30 January 2020, <https://theintercept.com/2020/01/30/india-citizenship-act-caa-nrc-assam/>. Accessed 4 February 2020.
- Spencer, Metta. Message to Nyla Ali Khan. 24 June 2020. E-mail.
- . “Psychotrauma.” Project Save the World. Charles Tauber and Sandra Maric, 2 March 2020, <https://youtu.be/ywuVhM5Y-z8>.
- Stamm, Hudnall B., ed. *Secondary Traumatic Stress: Self-Care Issues for Clinicians, Researchers, and Educators*. Maryland: Sidran Press, 1995.
- Stein, Arlene. *Reluctant Witnesses: Survivors, Their Children, and the Rise of Holocaust Consciousness*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014.
- Stierlin, Helm. “The Dialogue Between the Generations About the Nazi Era.” In *The Collective Silence: German Identity and the Legacy of Shame*. Edited by Heimannsberg, Barbara and Christoph J. Schmidt. Translated by Cynthia

- Oudejans Harris and Gordon Wheeler. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1993: 143–161.
- Sturken, Marita. *Tangled Memories: The Vietnam War, the AIDS Epidemic, and the Politics of Remembering*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997.
- Subramanian, Shreerekha. Message to Nyla Ali Khan. 30 August 2020. E-mail.
- Summerfield, Derek. “A Critique of Seven Assumptions Behind Psychological Trauma Programmes in War-Affected Areas.” *Social Science and Medicine* 48, 1999: 1449–62.
- Swidler, Leonard. Message to Nyla Ali Khan. 25 June 2020. E-mail.
- Tabbernee, William. *Early Christianity in Contexts: An Exploration across Cultures and Continents*. Michigan: Baker Academic, 2014.
- . Message to Nyla Ali Khan. 10 August 2020. E-mail.
- Tauber, Charles. Message to Nyla Ali Khan. 1 August 2020; 13 August 2020. E-mail.
- Thakur, Manindra, and Ajay Gudavarthy. “What NEP Could Have Learnt from Delhi University and JNU.” *newsclick.in*, News Click, 1 September 2020, https://www.newsclick.in/what-NEP-have-learnt-delhi-university-JNU?fbclid=IwAR1d5Bhm-fMG5ILa3w_mxy9yjG1_yNoB3dAT7JEdzuwwK6BTcrOKV5Q5LM0. Accessed 1 September 2020.
- Trivedi, Divya. “Muslims Form Human Chain to Save Temple in Delhi.” *Frontline.thehindu.com*, Frontline, 27 February 2020. <http://www.google.com/amp/s/frontline.thehindu.com/dispatches/article30930931.ece/amp/>. Accessed 8 August 2020.
- Tutu, Desmond. “Foreword by Chairperson.” In *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa Report*, 5 Vols. Cape Town: Juta, 1998: 7 [27]; In *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa Report*, Vol. 1, Ch. 1. Cape Town: Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 1998, <https://www.justice.gov.za/trc/report/finalreport/Volume%201.pdf>. Accessed 28 April 2020.
- Volkan, Vamik. *Enemies on the Couch: A Psychopolitical Journey through War and Peace*. North Carolina: PitchStone Publishing, 2013. EBSCOhost, www.file:///C:/Users/Nyla/AppData/Local/Temp/ebscohost.pdf.
- . *A Nazi Legacy: Depositing, Transgenerational Transmission, Dissociation, and Remembering Through Action*. New York: Routledge, 2015.
- Weine, S., Muzurovic, N., Kulauzovic, Y., Besic, S., Lezic, A., Mujagic, A., Muzurovic J, Spahovic D, Feetham S, Ware N, Knafl K, and Pavkovic I. “Family Consequences of Refugee Trauma.” *Family Process* 43, 2004: 147–160.
- Wessells, Michael G. “Culture, Power, and Community: Intercultural Approaches to Psychosocial Assistance and Healings.” In *Honoring Differences: Cultural Issues in the Treatment of Trauma and Loss*. Edited by Kathleen Nader, Nancy Dubrow, and Beth Hudnall Stamm. Philadelphia: Brunner/ Mazel, 1999: 267–82.

- Welzer, Harald, Sabine Moller, and Karoline Tschuggnall. *“Opa war kein Nazi”*: Nationalsozialismus und Holocaust im Familiengedächtnis. Frankfurt am Main, Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 2002.
- Wilder, Gray. “Race, Reason, Impasse: Césaire, Fanon, and the Legacy of Emancipation.” *Radical History Review* 90, Fall 2004: 31–61.
- Yoneyama, Shoko. *The Japanese High School: Silence and Resistance*. London: Routledge, 1999.
- Zhan, Lin. “Diversity Research Initiatives: Reflection and Thoughts.” In *Asian American Voices: Engaging, Empowering, Enabling*. Edited by Lin Zhan. New York: National League for Nursing, 2009: 91–106.
- Zohar, Danah, and Ian Marshall. *Spiritual Capital: Wealth We Can Live By*. Oakland: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2004.

INDEX

A

Abdullah, Sheikh Mohammad, [117](#)
 Abraham, Bobins, [35](#)
 Adithi, [61](#)
 adult literacy program, [61](#)
 “A Dynamic World Requires Inclusion and Diversity”, [45](#)
 Afghanistan, [1](#), [36](#), [81](#)
 Africa, [2](#), [67](#), [73](#), [83](#), [94](#), [95](#), [105](#)
 African Americans, [91](#), [115](#), [116](#)
 African National Congress (ANC), [96](#), [125](#), [172](#)
 agential capacity, [53](#)
 Agger, Inger, [10](#)
 aggression, self-protective, [117](#)
 Ahmad, Aijaz, [39](#)
 Alexander, Jeffrey C., [30](#), [114](#)
 Alhawasi, Nourah Abdullah M., [43](#), [50](#), [109](#), [110](#)
 alienation, [4](#), [46](#), [47](#), [67–69](#), [91](#), [104](#), [105](#), [110](#)
 Allen, [83](#)
 American College Health Association (ACHA), [9](#)

Anderson, Tonnia, [89–91](#), [117](#)
 “An Interventionist Foreign Policy Blurs the Line of Demarcation Between Neoconservatives and Neoliberals”, [2](#)
 anomie, [26](#), [71](#), [73](#), [110](#)
 apartheid, [12](#), [67](#), [73](#), [86](#), [87](#), [94–98](#), [108](#), [119](#), [124](#), [125](#), [127–134](#), [136–140](#), [142](#), [143](#), [145](#), [146](#), [148–150](#), [152](#), [153](#), [155](#), [156](#), [159](#), [163](#), [165](#), [166](#), [169](#), [170](#), [173](#)
 “Argument for Logotherapy in a Rural South African Setting”, [6](#), [105](#)
 Ashplant, Timothy, [xix](#)
 Assam, [37](#)
 Assam Accord, [37](#)
 atrocities, [19](#), [26](#), [31](#), [38](#), [57](#), [78](#), [96–98](#), [108](#), [171](#)
 authentic relationships/authenticity, [7](#), [55](#), [182](#)
 Azanian Peoples’ Liberation Army, [96](#), [97](#)

B

Balkans, 7, 92–94, 119
 Ball, Karyn, 3
 Bangladesh, 36
 barefoot therapists, 78
 Bargen, Catherine, 12
 Barnes, Robert C., 101
 Berlant, Lauren, 6
 Besic, S., 99
 Bettelheim, Bruno, 94
 Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), 27–30, 32, 33, 35, 38, 39, 49, 117
 Birla, Puja, 30
 Black Lives Matter (BLM), 91, 113, 114
 Bosnia, 80, 84, 99, 181, 184
 Brahminism, 30
 Brown, Laura S., 10, 59
 Buckmaster, Claudia, 55
 building bridges, 43, 82, 106
 Burns, Kelly, 117
 Butler, Judith, 3

C

Cambodian Americans, 42
 Canada, 7
 capacity building, 34, 168
 Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSC), 29, 31
 Chafe, William, 115
 Chakma, Suhas, 37
 Chang, Suzette, 114–116
 Chatterjee, Chandra, 37
 Chaudhuri, Pooja, 38
 chosen glories and chosen traumas, 26, 27, 30, 35
 Citizens for Justice and Peace (CJP), 37
 Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), 36, 38
 civil discourse, 79

clash of civilization, 117
 class oppression, 30
 coalition-building, 56
 Coalition for Work with Psychotrauma and Peace (CWWPP), 26, 77, 78, 85, 110
 cognitive dissonance, 5
 collective action, 91
 collective identity, 6, 7, 115
 collective silence, 24, 108. *See also* Hecker, Margarete and Salm, Heidi
 collective subjectivities, 17
 collectivist ethnic culture, 59
 colonial repression (or imperial subjugation), 70
 common ground, 33, 41, 52, 81, 106, 139, 180
 communalism, 49
 communalization, 32
 communal politics, 35, 38
 communication, channels of, 99
 communitarian coping/community support, 7, 91
 community and institution building, 12, 114
 confidence-building measures, 17
 Conflict Transformation Across Cultures (CONTACT), 74, 181
 conflict zones, 2, 4–6, 8, 20, 41–43, 46, 50, 57, 68, 71, 73, 74, 83, 88, 91, 95, 98, 105, 108, 109, 111, 116
 Congo Free State, 3
 conscientious objection, 8
 conscientize, 61, 67
 consensus-building, 52
 constitutional propriety, 20
 Constitution of India, 18, 31, 38, 39
 Constitution of India, Article 28, 48
 Constitution of India, Article 370, 18
 Contemporary South Asia, 65

correctional education, 118
 Craps, Stef, 2, 3, 5, 7, 96
 creative education, 61
 crisis of confidence, 71
 critical intelligence, 31
 critical thinking, 1, 27, 35, 47, 62,
 64, 82, 117
 Croatia, 80, 83, 84
 cult of personality, 94
 cultural/religious identity, 22, 42, 109
 cultural alterity, 18
 cultural intelligence, 115, 116
 cultural pride, 2, 116
 cultural trauma, 4, 22, 84
 culture of silence, 70, 71, 94, 95,
 107–109
 Cusack, Shannon E., 8

D

Dalits, 34
 dehumanization of women, 30
 Delhi Riots, 35
 Delhi Riot Victims, 35
 demonization, 40, 83
*Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of
 Mental Disorders*, 9
 dialogue, 8, 15, 23, 24, 33, 35,
 41–43, 46, 51, 57, 59, 62, 80,
 85, 87, 124, 135, 144, 149, 159,
 165, 167, 168, 170, 179, 183
 dictatorial regimes, 94
 digitalized knowledge, 34
 digital transformation, 34
 diplomacy, 41, 85
 disalienation, 5
 Discourse of Nationalisms in South
 Asia, 85
 disenfranchised minorities, 31, 38
 displaced families, 108, 109
 divulging information. *See* revelation
 of truth

Doctors Without Borders, 10
 Dogra Hindu, 18
 Dower, John W., 1, 40
 Dubois, W.E.B., 90
 Dutta, Sachdeva Sujata, 30

E

*Early Christianity in Contexts: An
 Exploration across Cultures and
 Continents*, 44
 Edkins, Jenny, 3
 education, 8, 20, 28, 29, 31, 33, 34,
 40, 43, 44, 48–50, 53, 56–58,
 61–63, 65–67, 73, 74, 78, 83,
 89, 92, 95, 98, 99, 106, 115,
 117–119, 169, 176, 179–181,
 184
 educational institutions, 6, 19, 43–45,
 48, 88
 Education as Catalyst for Inter-
 generational Refugee Family
 Communication About War and
 Trauma, 91
 Education of Change, 74
 efficacious teaching, 64
 Eliasoph, Nina, 17
 emancipatory pedagogical
 methodology, 6
 emancipatory traditions/goals, 110,
 113
 emotional development, 16
 emotional integration, 39
 emotional trauma, 8, 47, 97, 107
 empowering the traumatized, 77
 entitlement ideology, 26, 30
 environmental awareness, 91
 epidermalization, 5
 Erasing Indigenous History of
 Kashmir, 117
 exclusionary ideology, 24, 28
 Extremism is the Bane of Our
 Existence, 65

extremist ideologies, 100

F

family histories, 24, 84
 family reconstruction, 21, 23, 24, 26
 Fanon, Frantz, 4, 5, 93
 Fassin, Didier, 3
 Feldman, Allen, 97
 Felman, Shoshana, 2, 3
 female sexuality, 11, 83
 Figley, Charles R., 9
 forgiveness and healing, 86
 For Once Ask Not What Kashmir Can
 Do For You: Ask What You Can
 Do For Kashmir, 19
 Frankenthal, Yitzhak, 106
 Frankl, Viktor E., 36, 73, 74,
 101–104, 108, 110, 111
 Friese, Kai, 30
 fundamentalism, 32, 39, 47, 177

G

Gavins, Raymond, 115
 gender equality/inequality, 58, 67, 92
 gender hierarchies/violence, 57
 Germany, 15, 23–25, 84
 global homogeneity, 177
 Greece, 40, 84
 Green, Paula, 59, 74, 75
 Gudavarthy, Ajay, 34, 35, 114
 gun violence, 68, 91

H

Harper Lee's *To Kill A Mockingbird*
 – Presentation, 118
 Harris, Betty J., 67, 73, 80, 94–96
 Hashimoto, Akiko, 1, 4, 6–8, 17–20,
 22, 40, 42, 84
 healing, personal/familial, 107
 Hecker, Margarete, 23–26

Heidelberg Tavern Massacre, 96
 Herzegovina, 84
 higher education, privatizing, 34
 Hinduism, 30
 Hindu Rashtra, 49
 Hindutva, 28, 34, 49
*History and Its Limits: Human,
 Animal, Violence*, 92
 Hitler, Adolph, 16, 22, 95
 holistic education, 33, 64, 73
 Holocaust, 3, 4, 23, 43, 51, 84, 93,
 101, 111, 176
 Homogenizing India, 36
 “Homogenizing India: The
 Citizenship Debate”, 36,
 39
 human rights violations, 1, 43, 50, 98,
 131, 138, 145, 172

I

identity formation, 16, 22, 51, 52, 63,
 79
 identity markers, 26, 27
 identity politics, 46, 65
 ideology, 18, 21, 22, 33, 35, 39, 48,
 90, 100
 “Impact of Kashmir Atrocities on
 Women”, 58
 imperial subjugation (or colonial
 repression), 70
 India, 13, 19, 27, 29–34, 36–40, 48,
 49, 54, 61, 62, 66, 85, 117
 “India is Gradually Leaning Toward a
 Dangerous Unitarianism”, 36, 39
 Indus Valley/Indus Saraswati, 30
 Institute for Healing of Memories
 (IHOM), 12, 44, 89, 122, 126,
 127, 130, 131, 138, 171, 172
 interfaith engagement, 45
 intergenerational connections, 8, 99
 intergenerational trauma, 4, 46, 95,
 101, 107

International Society for Traumatic
Stress Studies, 9
interreligious dialogue, 43, 94, 99
Iraq, 1, 81
*Islam, Women, and Violence in
Kashmir: Between India and
Pakistan*, 103, 110
Israel, 74, 106, 107, 181

J

Jammu and Kashmir (J & K), 2, 6–8,
10, 12, 13, 18–20, 39, 45, 50,
51, 56, 57, 59, 62, 63, 66, 69,
70, 85, 88, 104, 117, 119
Janoff-Bulman, Ronnie, 11
Japan, 1, 19, 22, 40, 84
Jayal, Niraja Gopal, 39
Jensen, S.B., 10
Jha, Prem Shankar, 38
Johnson, Hannibal, 116
Jonathan Tropper's "*This is Where I
Leave You*," - Presentation, 118
Justice Shah, 49

K

Kanda, Alphonse, 6, 47, 53, 73, 95,
96, 104, 105, 108–110
Karchmer, Donald, 44
Kashmir/Kashmiris, 2, 10, 18, 19, 31,
45, 46, 51–53, 55–59, 64–67,
69–71, 85–88, 91, 99, 105, 109,
117
Khan, Iman, xxii
Khan, Nyla Ali, ix
Khan, Sakina Yusuf, 30
Khrushchev, Nikita, 108
Kiang, Peter Nien-chu, 56
kinship loyalties, 25
Korenblit, Joan, 119
Korenblit, Mike, 89, 119
Korstad, Robert, 115

Kosovo, 22
Kulauzovic, Y., 99
Kurds, 1

L

LaCapra, Dominick, 6, 24, 92, 98,
119
Ladakh, 18
Langsley, Michael, 44
language dislocation, 173
Lapsley, Michael, 12, 86–89, 91, 125,
126, 132, 136, 140–146, 172
League of German girls, 21, 27
"*Let's Talk About it, Oklahoma*," 117
Lezic, A., 99
Lineages, 39
Lin, Nancy J., 42, 48, 91, 98
local coping strategies, 7
logotherapy, 5, 6, 73, 101–105
loyalty to life itself, 75, 184

M

majoritarian and majoritarianism, 34,
40, 103
Malcolm X, 90
Mandela, Nelson, 87, 108
Marshall, Ian, 104
Maslow, Abraham, 104
Mass Neurotic Triad, 104
Matto, Mohammad Ali, xv
Matto, Suraiya Ali (nee' Abdullah),
xxiii
McCammon, Susan L., 10
McCann, I.L., 11
Médecins Sans Frontières, 10
memory culture, 19
militant/vigilante groups, 19, 43, 50,
68, 85, 116
militant nationalism, 19, 88, 103
militarized zone/militarization, 2, 4,
5, 19, 45, 68, 72, 81

Misri, Krishna, 46, 69–72
 Modi, Narendra, 18, 38, 117
 Mojzes, Paul, 43, 72, 92–94, 99
 Moller, Sabine, 20
 Mollica, Richard, 41
 mourning, 8, 27, 41, 42, 119
 Mujagic, A., 99
 Muslim culture, 39
 Muzurovic, J., 99
 Muzurovic, N., 99

N
 Najuma, Ayanna, 118
 Nandy, Ashis, 33–35
 national belonging, 40
 national chauvinism, 32
 National Council of Education
 Research and Training (NCERT),
 29, 30, 32
 National Curriculum Framework of
 School Education (NCFSE), 29
 national interest, 40
 nationalism, 31, 39, 45, 53, 85, 117
 National Register of Citizens (NRC),
 37, 38
 National Rifle Association (NRA), 68
 national security, xviii
 “Nation-Building and
 Conflict-Resolution”, 39
 nationhood, 18, 22, 32, 42, 70
 native language, keeping alive, 66,
 108, 109
 Nazi/Nazism /Nazi Germany, 3, 15,
 17, 20, 21, 23, 24, 26, 84
 Nazi youth movement, 27
 NCERT. *Contemporary India* (social
 science, class X), 31
 neoliberal, 2, 34
 New National Education Policy
 (NEP), 33
 Nussbaum, Martha C., 18, 29–33, 40,
 47, 49, 61, 62, 65, 117

O
 Okana, Kaori, 40
 Oklahoma Educators Evolve (OKEE),
 114
 Oklahoma Humanities, 117
 Opher-Cohn, Liliane, 84
 Other Backward Classes (OBC), 34

P
 Pakistan, 19, 36, 37, 39
 Palestinian, 74, 106, 107, 181, 183
Parchment of Kashmir-ed, 70
 Parents’ Circle-Families Forum
 (PCFF), 106
 participatory democracy, 33, 92
 passivity/passive resistance, 41, 86,
 94, 166
 peace activists/builders, 43, 50
 “Peace and Resolution of Conflict”,
 39
 Pearlman, L.A., 11
 pedagogical methodologies/reform, 6,
 46, 81, 118
 perpetrator trauma, 24
 personal narratives/memories, 22, 47,
 93, 124, 170
 political alienation, 5
 political enfranchisement, 2, 114, 116
 political identity, 19, 39
 politically marginalized, 37
 political violence, 99
 politico-cultural trauma, 98
 Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
 (PTSD), 9, 10
 potentially traumatic event (PTE), 9
 Pragmatic Empowerment, 78
 preservation of truth, 42
 Project Save the World, 111
 prosopography, 27
 psychiatric disorder, 9
 psychological counseling, 5, 97
 psychological trauma, 4, 54, 84, 107

R

race relations, 91
 racial deficiency, 90
 racial justice, 4, 114
 racial minorities, 90
 radical/terrorist groups, 43
 racial violence, 119
 Ramphela, Mamphela, 105
 “Realpolitik Relegates Human Rights to the Background”, 8
 Rechtman, Richard, 3
 reconciliation, 24, 49, 74, 85, 106, 107, 124, 127, 135, 145, 149, 172, 180–183
 rehabilitation/healing, 86
 reincarceration, 118
 religion and politics, 43, 48, 49
 religious values, 29, 38, 49
 repression, 24, 25, 110
 re-scripting history, 31
 resentment, 22, 94, 158
 resilience, 7, 74, 80, 87, 101, 108, 114–116, 119, 135, 136
 restorative Justice, 12, 85, 92, 96, 98
 revelation of truth, 92
 “Revitalization of Federalism and Restoration of Civil Rights in Kashmir”, 39
 “Revival of Democratic and Civil Society Institutions in Jammu and Kashmir”, 13
 rewritten textbooks, 36
 Richter, Linda, 105
 Rights and Risks Analysis Group, 37
 “Robert M. Pirsig’s *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*,” - Presentation, 118
 rogerian arguments, 81
 Russia, 95

S

Salm, Heidi, 20–22, 27

Saunders, Rebecca, 2
 Schutzstaffel, 21
Secularism, Caste Under Axed Topics as CBSE Reduces Syllabus, 31
 “Seeking Solomon’s Wisdom: Reflections of a Daughter of Kashmir from the Land of Oklahoma”, 2
 self-actualization, 104, 116
 self-determination, 12, 18, 88
 self-preservation, 102
 self-realization, 2
 self-reflection, 117, 154
 Seltzer, 114
 Serbs/Serbia, 22, 80, 83, 84, 181
 Shankar, Soumya, 38
 Sigal, J., 17
 silencing, 5, 21, 22, 24, 25, 42, 47, 51, 54, 59, 70, 74, 84, 89, 92–94, 98, 117
 social and economic hierarchies, 34
 social construct, 91
 social deathmaking, 6
 social inclusion, 75
 social justice, 2, 7, 45, 68, 89, 114, 116, 178
 social silence, 70, 93
 sociocultural/political issues, 8, 35, 47
 sociocultural/socioeconomic issues, 45
 sociocultural trauma, 45, 73, 95, 98, 106, 107
 socioeconomic classes, 18
 socio-political groups, 107
 South Africa, 6, 7, 12, 67, 71, 86–88, 91, 95–97, 104, 108, 109, 119, 122, 124, 126–128, 131, 135–137, 139, 142, 149–153, 155, 159, 164, 169, 170, 173, 174
 South Asia, 2, 12, 58, 59, 66, 71, 109
 Spencer, Metta, 22, 26, 78, 107, 108, 111

spiritual quotient (SQ), 29
 Stalin, Joseph, 95, 107, 108
 state/non-state actors, 17, 41, 42, 50, 110
 Stein, Arlene, 47, 51, 93
 Stierlin, Helm, 15–17
 Sturken, Marita, 19
 Sturmabteilung, 21
 Subramanian, Shreerekha, 31, 36, 47
 Sub-Saharan Africa, 2
 subservience of mind, 39
 Summerfield, Derek, 78
 Supreme Court of India, 37, 38, 48
 survival, prioritizing, 26
 Suyemoto, Karen L., 42, 48, 98
 Swidler, Leonard, 94, 95
 systematic discrimination, 32, 49
 systemic discrimination, 4, 54, 86, 89, 114
 systemic oppression, 95

T

Tabbernee, William, 44, 45, 68, 72, 73, 106, 107
 tampering with education, 32
 Tauber, Charles David, 26, 47, 77–80, 83–85, 110
 teachers, importance of, 44
 Thakur, Manindra, 35
The Life of a Kashmiri Woman: Dialectic of Resistance and Accommodation, 20
 transformative justice, 10, 87
 transformative strategy, 71
 transgenerational communication, 99
 transgenerational trauma, 96
 trauma, sociocultural, 5, 8
 trauma survivors/recovery, 7, 10, 12, 98
 trauma theory, 2
 traumatic stressor, 9

Trivedi, Divya, 35
 Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), 86, 96–98, 122, 124–127, 130, 131, 135, 138, 139, 143, 148, 155, 156, 158, 165, 166, 168, 171–173, 181
 Tschuggnall, Karoline, 20
 Tse Tung, Mao, 95
 Tsuchiya, Motonori, 40
 Tutu, Desmond, 42, 86, 96

U

unbalanced narratives, 32
 United States (US), 1, 2, 7, 8, 12, 31, 40, 42, 44, 62, 66, 69, 83, 90, 91, 94, 115, 116
 Urdu literature, 39
 US Constitution, 115

V

victimhood, 17, 94, 100
 Vietnam, 1
 violence, history of, 108
 violence, state/structural, 113
 Volkan, Vamik, 26, 30, 41, 63, 64, 84

W

Weine, Stevan, 99
 Welzer, Harald, 20
 whiteness/white supremacy, 90, 91
 Wilder, Gray, xviii
 “Without a Sense of Caring, There Can Be No Community”, 119
 Women’s and Gender Studies, 82, 83
 women’s empowerment, 58
 women’s liberation, 1
Writing History, Writing Trauma, 6, 24, 98

Y

Yoneyama, Shoko, [40](#)

Z

Zhan, Lin, [62–64](#)

Zohar, Danah, [104](#)